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EC TALES FROM THE CRYPT

REPRINT EDITION

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

DANGER
QUICKSAND
KEEP AWAY!



CLOSED

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HOW, HOW! I SEE YOU GOT UP ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY "SALES FROM THE CRYPT AGAIN" WELL, I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU - YOU'LL GET YOUR FAIR SHARE OF SHAKES AND SHIVERS. BELIEVE ME! READY TO BOOSH 'GOOSH'? HOW LIE BACK ON THE MARBLE SLAB, PULL THE SHEET UP OVER YOUR HEAD, AND I'LL TELL YOU THE FIRST STORY! IT'S HARRY GORDON'S STORY, TOLD IN HIS OWN WORDS!" HE CALLS IT.

BATS IN MY Belfry!

I FIRST FOUND OUT THAT I WAS BORN DEAF WHEN I VISITED OUR FAMILY DOCTOR. I HAD GONE TO HIM BECAUSE OF A PAINFUL, RASHACHE.

SIN SORRY, HARRY! I KNOW WHAT THIS WILL DO TO YOUR DAISY! THE BIMPTONS ARE UNSTRATABLE! IN A MONTH OR SO YOU WILL BE STONE DEAD!"

ARE YOU SCARED, DOCTOR? CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING TO OPERATE?



NOT NOTHING I CAN DO / WELL
CAN BE DONE / ...THANK YOU
FOR YOUR THOUGHTS FOR EVERYTHING
AT NO OPERATION.

I JUST / WELL
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR THOUGHTS FOR EVERYTHING
AT NO OPERATION.

I WENT HOME TO MY WIFE JOAN / I
TOLD HER WHAT THE DOCTOR HAD
SAID...

YOU MEAN
YOU WON'T BE
ABLE TO ACT
ANYMORE?

HOW COULD
IT TO KNOW MY
VOICE
EXPRESSION
WOULD BE LOST?

THREE MONTHS
WENT BY / THEY
CAN DO IT SO SEE,
BUT IT'S EXPENSIVE!
MADE MONEY?

I WILL, DEAR
I WILL...



BUT EVERY DOCTOR I WENT TO TOLD ME THE SAME
STORY! IT WAS USELESS! WHEN I STARTED TO MISS
SILENTNESS...

SORRY, BABY! WE'LL
HAVE TO GET ANOTHER
STAR!

JOAN! WHAT DID YOU
SAY?



AND THEN IT CAME! THE THREE, HEAVY SILENCE! I
WAS STONE DEAD! I WALKED IN A WORLD OF STILLNESS!
THE TRAFFIC, THE CROWD, THE ORCHESTRAS
IN NIGHT CLUBS... ALL SILENT! I HAD TO LEARN TO
LIP-READ TO UNDERSTAND WHAT JOAN SAID TO ME.

I HAD OUR MONEY! IT'S PRACTICALLY
GONE! UNDERSTAND? WE'RE
ALMOST BROKE. SHORT
CLEARED OUT!

YES, JOAN...



THINGS GOT WORSE! I TRIED TO FIND WORK, BUT I COULDN'T
DO ANYTHING! ACTING WAS ALL I KNEW! THEN I THOUGHT
OF AN OLD FRIEND, JOHN BARRY! JOHN AND I HAD PLAYED
SUMMER STOCK TOGETHER! THEN JOHN HAD BEEN KILLED!
I WENT TO SEE HIM.

WELL, WELL, BABY BORDON!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU!

DID YOU SAY MY
NAME, JOHNIE? IT'S
DEAD! I CAN'T HEAR
YOU! DID YOU SAY MY
NAME?



OF COURSE! I RECOGNIZED
YOU IMMEDIATELY!

YOU CAN SEE?
THEN WHY DO YOU
WEAR DARK GLASSES?



"TO HIDE MY EYES?" "GOOD LORD!"
"THESE EYES!"

JOHN'S EYES BLEAMED YELLOW IN
THE DIM LIGHT OF HIS ROOM; THEY
WERE THE EYE OF A CAT.

WHAT, WHAT DID THEY? THEY'RE CAT'S
EYES! BUT WHO CARES, HARRY?
I CAN SEE!

I HAD DIFFICULTY READING JOHN'S
LIPS, BUT I MANAGED TO UNDERSTAND
ENOUGH OF WHAT HE SAID TO GET
THE WHOLE STORY... I FOUND

GUT ABOUT HIM THROUGH
ANOTHER IDIOT-BLIND MAN! HE'S
A DYSTOPIAN! HE OPERATED ON
ME, DRAFFED THESE CATS
EVERY AND NOW I CAN
SEE!...

DO YOU THINK HE CAN HELP ME,
JOHN, RESTORE MY HEARTS
THE SAME WAY?

WHY DON'T YOU SO
SEE WHO ILL GIVE
YOU HIS
ADDRESS...



THE SHOP WAS IN A DARK AND WINDING DARK STREET
IN THE SHABBIEST PART OF THE CITY! THERE WERE
STUFFED ANIMALS IN THE DUSTY WINDOW.

JOHN SAID HE WASN'T A
DOCTOR, BUT THIS? THIS
LOOKS LIKE A DAZZLING'S
SHOP!



I WENT IN' A LITTLE BILL TINKLED BEHIND A CURTAIN
DOOR AT THE PEAK OF THE SHORT THE DOOR OF STALE
HEAT AND DROVE HIS HEAVILY ON THE AIR! HE CAME
FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN! HE WAS TALL AND DARK
GUMMETT LOOKING... YOU...
YOU WERE RECOMMENDED
IN A FRIEND? YOU... HELPED
HIM TO SEE AGAIN? I
WONDERED IF...

I SEE BY THE WAY
YOU WATCH MY LIFE
THAT YOU ARE DEAF?
COME INTO THE BACK!
I WILL EXAMINE YOU!



THE PEAK OF THE SHOP LOOKED LIKE AN ALCHEMIST'S
MISHTAKE! THERE WERE BOTTLES AND JARS OF
VARIOUS COLORED LIQUIDS AND POWDERS! IN THE
CENTER OF THE ROOM WAS A MODERN-LOOKING OPERATING
TABLE WITH SP-DO-CARE EQUIPMENT! HE EXAMINED
ME SPEEDLY...

YOUR ASSISTANT REVIVED AND
PARALYZED! I WILL HAVE TO REPLACE
YOUR BRAIN! READING SYSTEM
WITH SOMETHIN' DIFFERENT...



WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?

I PROPOSE TRANSFERRING THE AUDITORY SYSTEM OF A BAT INTO YOUR BODY...



I ANSWERED TO THE OPERATION! AFTER ALL... WHAT DID I HAVE TO LOSE? I BREATHED DEEP, MR. GORDON!



CAN YOU IMAGINE THE SENSATION? HAVE YOU EVER TURNED A RADIO UP FULL BLAST? THAT'S WHAT EVERYTHING SOUNDED LIKE TO ME AS I MADE MY WAY HOME! WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR I HEARD JOHN'S VOICE! THIS WAS UNUSUAL ON THE PHONE...

I THREW HE JUST CAME IN! I'LL HAVE TO WAKE UP TOMORROW SOONER, DEAREST! YES... OF COURSE I LOVE YOU!



A BAT!

TEST THE BAT'S AUDITORY SYSTEM IS ON... IT IS EXTRA-SENSITIVE! IF THE OPERATION IS A SUCCESS, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HEAR BETTER THAN YOU DID BEFORE YOU LEFT YOUR HEARING...



HIS VOICE SLAMMED INTO MY BRAIN! IT WAS HARRIER AND LOUD...

YOU'LL GET USED TO IT, MR. GORDON! ...I... I GENUINELY HOPE SO!



I COULDN'T SLEEP IN IT! JOHN... AND ANOTHER DAY'S DECIDED NOT TO TELL JOHN ABOUT MY GOOD FORTUNE... ABOUT MY HEARING BEING RESTORED! I WANTED TO WAIT... TO FIND OUT MORE! THAT NIGHT, I COULDN'T SLEEP! I GOT DRESSED AND WENT FOR A WALK...

FUNNY! I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING... LIKE I WANT TO Scream...



I GUESSED I WALKED ALL NIGHT! WHEN I RETURNED, JOHN WAS GONE! SHE HAD GOTTERN A JOB SINCE I LOST MY HEARING AND MUST HAVE LEFT EARLY THAT MORNING...

I FEEL SO SLEEPY... NOW!



A HEAVY DROWSINESS CAME OVER ME! I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP... BUT WHEN I AWOKE...

WHAT IN BLAZES...



I STAGGERED INTO THE BATH-SIDE AND LOOKED AT MYSELF IN THE MIRROR! I NEEDED A SHAVE BADLY, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE...

Hairy hair growing ON MY FOREHEAD... MY NOSE! FINE GREY HAIRS...



I WAS FRIGHTENED! I SHAKED CAREFULLY, CLEARING MY FACE OF THE GROWTH! THEN I STEPPED INTO THE SHOWER! AS I RAISED MY ARM TO SOAP SHOOF IT...

WHAT THE...? A NEW BRAIN? A MEMBRANE GROWING ACROSS MY ARMPIT...



I DRESSED QUICKLY AND RUSHED TO MY FRIEND JOHN'S HOUSE... JOHN, WHO HAD FIRST RECOMMENDED THE STRANGE SHOP WITH ITS STILL STRANGER PROPRIETOR! IT WAS GETTING DARK OUTSIDE! I FLUNG IN HIS DOOR WITHOUT RHOOSHING...

JOHN!

GET OUT... GONEONLY!



HIS ROOM WAS DARKLY LIT! HIS FELINE EYES GLOWED WITH AN EERIE YELLOW LIGHT! HE LAY IN A CORNER, WHITE, PICKED-CLEAR BONES ABOUT HIM! HIS FACE WAS COVERED WITH A DARK-BLACK FUR...

GET AWAY FROM ME, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! I... I'M AN ANIMAL!

WHAT'S HAPPENED? TELL ME! TELL ME!



IT'S THAT HORRIBLE PANTHER! HE... HE'S DONE
SOMETHING TO ME! THESE AREN'T CAT'S EYES.
HE'S NEVER MET THE EYES OF A
PANTHER! AND... I CAN'T HELP MYSELF!
I... I HAVE AN INCESSANT URGE TO... KILL?

LODGE
WELL?
YOU

JOHN SNAPPED ON A LIGHT...

LOOK AT ME! LOOK! I'M
EVERYTHING TO LOOK
LIKE A PANTHER! DON'T
DO TO HIM, BABY! DON'T...

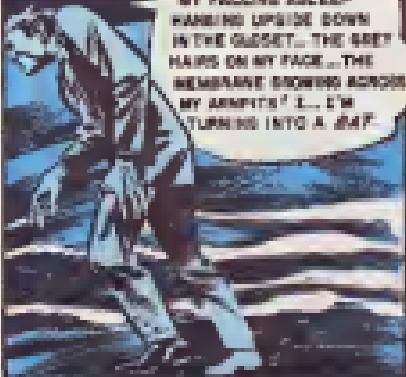
IT'S TOO
LATE, JOHN!
IT'S TOO
LATE!



JOHN SHUTTED HIS EYES. BUT HE CAN'T SLEEP.
SO I BEGAN TO WALK...

THAT EXPLAINS

MY FALLING ASLEEP
HANGING UPSIDE DOWN
IN THE CLOSET... THE GREY
HAIRS ON MY FACE... THE
MEMBRANE BROWNING ACROSS
MY EYESHIPS! I... I'M
TURNING INTO A CAT...



AND THAT NIGHT, AS I WALKED THROUGH THE BLACKNESS, I
BEGAN TO UTTER SHORT SHRIEK, SHRIEKS! AND I LISTENED FOR
THE SHRIEKS TO ECHO BACK! I WAS WEARING THE BATIS RADAR-
LIKE DEVICE FOR TRAVELING THROUGH THE DARKNESS! WHEN
DAWN CAME, I MADE MY WAY HOME...

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL
NIGHT? CAN YOU UNDERSTAND
ME? WHY DID YOU STAY OUT
ALL NIGHT?

I... I GOT A JOB,
JOAN! NIGHT WORK!



GOOD! THEN I'LL GET
MINE... TODAY!

IF YOU LIKE, JOHN!
I'M TIRED! I'M
BORED TO BORE!



SHE WENT OUT AND I LAY EXHAUSTED ON THE
BED AGAIN. I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP.
BUT WHEN I AWOKE IT WAS HANGING UPSIDE DOWN
IN THE CLOSET! I HEARD VOICES... JOAN'S VOICE...
AND A MAN'S!

HE CARRIED
A LARGE INSURANCE POLICY.
HE BLOOD! HE TOOK IT OUT
WHILE HE WAS ACTING AND
MAKING GOOD MONEY!

IS IT STILL
IN EFFECT?



I LISTENED FROM MY LAIR IN THE
CLOSET, I LISTENED...

YES! THE PREMIUM
IS DUE NEXT MONTH! WE'LL BE
ASCH/AFTERS
WE KILL HIM...



I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EARS!
THEY WERE PLANNING TO KIDNAP
ME? I GOT DOWN FROM THE
CLOTHES POLE AND SLOWLY
OPENED THE DOOR...

NOT TO GET ARRESTED
NOT TO GET AWAY
FROM THEM!



I PUSHED DOWN THE SHUTTERS AND
GET THE DOOR BEFORE THEY
COULD STOP ME...

IT WAS ALARMING! HE
MUST HAVE HEARD US! HE'LL GO TO
THE POLICE!



JOAN'S LOVER CAME AFTER ME! THE SIDEWALKS
WERE DARK AND DESERTED. I RAN... BUT PESTERED
LITTLE SMALL HIGH-PIKEED SHREWD THY WARMED
ME OF FEMMES, DEAD-END ALLEYS, AND BLIND
STREETS...

HARRY! IT'S NO USE!
I'LL GET YOU...



AS I RAN, I LOOKED DOWN AND SPRANG FROM MY
FINGERS, WHICH NAILS HAD BROKEN...

AND WHEN I DO... HARRY...



I PLACED MY GLAZED HAND OVER MY EYES! IT WAS
HARSH... AND OVER MY LOWER LIP, HARSHER...

FARSH! THE BRASHY
FARSH!

WHEN I GET YOU, HARRY,
I'LL KILL YOU!



I STOPPED RUNNING! THERE WAS NO NEED TO RUN ANY
LONGER! I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO! JOAN'S LOVER
CAME UP TO ME, LEAPING! THOROUGHLY BURNED IN
WORKING, I SPRANG AT HIM...

NO, NOT REEF BRAH!



HE LAY SPRAWLED GROTESQUELY ON THE COBBLESTONES... WHITE AS CHALK! TWO PUNCTURES TRICKLED CLARET ON HIS CHEST! HE WAS DEAD! HE HAD DRUNK HIS BLOOD...

I... I'M NOT...
JUST AN
ORDINARY
BAT...

I'M A VAMPIRE BAT!

I FAIRLY FLEW BACK THROUGH THE STREETS TO MY HOUSE BACK TO JOHN...

I KILLED
HIM, JOHN!

DO YOU GET HIM,
CHI-HARRY?
WHAT, WHAT'S
HAPPENED
TO YOU?



I KILLED HIM, AS YOU HAD PLANNED
TO KILL ME! AND NOW I MUST
KILL YOU... TOO...

NO, HARRY!
NOT!



Her BREAST WAS WHITE AND SOFT... NOT LIKE HER
WHEN I HAD FINISHED...

NOW, I'VE GOT TO DO ANOTHER...
AND MORE...



I FOUND A PLACE... A NICE QUIET PLACE TO HIDE! IT'S IN THIS
COFFIN, IN THIS MAUSOLEUM! WHAT DID I DO WITH THE BODY
THAT OCCUPIED IT BEFORE IT CAME FOR ME, I BROUGHT IT TO
JOHN... MY FRIEND! HE MADE SHORT WORK OF IT!



HENRY! WELL, THAT'S HARRY'S STORY,
BEGGERS! PERSONALLY, I THINK HE WAS A
LITTLE RAFFE DON'T YOUP ON BY THE
WAY? IF YOU HAVEN'T
ALREADY RECEIVED
MY 3 BY 7 PICS
— NOT A
DRAWING BUT AN
ACTUAL PHOTO-
GRAPHIC REPRO-
DUCTION AND
APPEAR IN THE FLESH
READ MY COLUMN,
THE GRAFT-KEEPER? I
DON'T BELIEVE IN THIS
ISSUE! AND HOW I'LL
TURN YOU OVER TO
THAT SAVAGE OLD
WITCH!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD MANNING HAD BEEN CLOSE FRIENDS ALL THROUGH THE YEARS AT MEDICAL SCHOOL. THEY HAD STUDIED TOGETHER AND GRADUATED TOGETHER! THEY HAD EVEN INTERNSED TOGETHER AT THE SAME HOSPITAL! THEY HAD DONE EVERYTHING TOGETHER AND, TOGETHER, THEY HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL...

SHHHH! LAUREL! WAKE UP YOUR MIND! LESTER OR NOT?

WHY NOT... BOTH OF YOU!

SAY, THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA! WE'LL JUST TAKE HER TO THE MOVIES, ARNOLD.

YEAH! Lester and Arnold had begun their medical careers together! But soon, they began to drift apart! They began to differ in *Philosophies of Medicine*.

I SAY THAT THE MAJORITY OF ALL-ADOLESCENTS ARE NOTHING BUT PROGRESSIVE OF THE BRAINS! THEY ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY INCAPACITATED!

BAH! Lester, you're mad! An adolescent is an illness and should be treated as such!



AND DR. LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD MANNING CAME TO A CROSSROADS AND EACH WENT IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION! LESTER TOOK THE PATH OF PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES THROUGH THE MIND, WHILE ARNOLD TOOK THE PATH OF SURGERY... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES BY SCALPEL, NEEDLE, AND PILLS! AND LAURIE... THE GIRL THEY BOTH LOVED... STOOD BETWEEN THEM, TRYING TO MAKE UP HER MIND!



LAURIE AND LESTER BECAME ENRAGED! THE MONTHS WENT BY AND THE WEDDING DAY CAME ROUND ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE THE EVENTUAL DAY LAURIE BECAME VERY SICK! SHE WAS RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL...

HERE, LESTER! HERE ARE THE X-RAYED LOOK FOR YOURSELF! SHE HAS A TUMOR GROWTH ON HER HEART! AN OPERATION MIGHT SAVE HER LIFE!

MARRY ME, YOU SAY WHAT ARE HER CHANCES? ARNOLD?



DON'T BE A FOOL, LESTER! JAMES BROWN IS THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN'T REMOVE A TUMOR THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY!

BEST IT'S POSSIBLE BY HYPNOTISM I'LL ARREST HER GROWTH! AFTER ALL... GROWTH IS CONTROLLED BY THE BRAIN!



I'M IN CHARGE HERE, DOCTOR JEROME! THERE'S NO TIME FOR YOUR PSYCHOSOMATIC HOGWASH! LAURIE'S LIFE IS AT STAKE...



THEN, ONE DAY, ARNOLD MANNING, THE SURGEON, RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM LAURIE! HE WENT TO SEE HER... "I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY THIS, ARNOLD. I'M WELL... LESTER HAS ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM, AND I'VE ACCEPTED! I'M... SORRY!"

SHE IS FEEL WELL. I HOPE YOU'LL BOTH BE VERY HAPPY TOGETHER!



"I CAN'T TELL, LESTER! THIS I WON'T ALLOW! MAYBE ONE CHANCE IN A THOUSAND IT'S A HIFY I'LL SAVE HER THROUGH PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE. MY WIFE, I'M SURE I CAN!"



YES! BUT THERE'S STILL THAT CHANCE! I'M ORDERING THE OPERATION! I SHALL PERFORM IT MYSELF!

NO GIVE ME A TRY PLEASE!



BUT LETTER DIDN'T GET HIS CHANCE! THE HOSPITAL BOARD VOTED HIM DOWN, AND DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING PERFORMED THE OPERATION HE DID HIS BEST AT!



I COULD HAVE SAVED HER!
I COULD HAVE SAVED HER
IF YOU HAD EVER HEARD THE
DANGER! YOU KILLED
HER, MANNING YOU AND
YOUR SURGICAL TEAM!



I... I DID ALL
I COULD,
LESTER!
NO? YOU COULD
HAVE LISTENED TO
ME! NOT ME! YOU'RE
A SURGEON! APPROPRIATE
FOOT! THAT'S
ALL YOU KNOW!



WELL, I'LL SHOW YOU, DOCTOR MANNING! SOME DAY, I'LL CONVINCE YOU THAT I WAS RIGHT!

PERHAPS, DOCTOR JEROME? PERHAPS, BUT I DOUBT IT.



AND SO THE YEARS PASSED! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING BECAME A WORLD FAMOUS SURGEON, WHILE DOCTOR LESTER JEROME REMAINED AN OBSCURE PSYCHOSOMATIC PHYSICIAN...

DOCTOR JEROME! I WOULDN'T GO TO HIM OR I'D BETTER! HE DON'T GIVE YOU FEELS OR ANYTHING! JUST HYPNOTIZED YOU. PSYCHOANALYZED YOU...

THE GUY OUGHT TO BE PSYCHOANALYZED HIMSELF! HE'S SICK!



ONE DAY, WHILE DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING WAS PERFORMING A ROUTINE OPERATION...

DOCTOR MANNING? WHAT IS IT?

SIMP... DON'T...
BEEP EVERYTHING...
IS ALREADY? TAKE
OVER... DOCTOR...



DOCTOR MANNING SLUMPED TO THE FLOOR, UNCONSCIOUS. HIS ASSISTANT TOOK OVER WHILE THEY CARRIED DOCTOR MANNING OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM TO A HOSPITAL BED...

PUPILS DILATED.
NO PAIN REACTION! SET HIM TO
X-RAY... AT ONCE!

DOCTOR YOU
MEAN...



YES! IT LOOKS LIKE...
A BRAIN TUMOR!

GIVE ME
X-RAY!
IMMEDIATELY!

CENTRAL HOURS LATER, DR. MANNING
REMAINED CONCERNED AS EVER WHEN HE
LOOKED AROUND.

I HAVE A
YOU COLLAPSED? SEVERE HEAD-
WHILE OPERATING. HOW'S HEAT...
DOCTOR! HOW DO YOU FEEL?
DOCTOR! HOW DO YOU FEEL?
WHAT'S WRONG
WITH ME?

HERE, DOCTOR MANN-
ING! DON'T LOOK AT THESE
X-RAYS!
FRONTAL SKULL
PRESSURE! THE
BRAIN HAS TO
GO!

HELLO DOCTOR! MAN WHOSE THESE
ARE FOLLY X-RAYS!

BUT... WITH A TUMOR
LIKE THIS, AN
IMMEDIATE OPERATION
IS IMPERATIVE OR
DEATH IN TWO MONTHS AT
THE MOST, DOCTOR MANNING!

AND... DANE GRANGE IS
TOLD THAT THE OPER-
ATION WILL SAVE MY
LIFE! AND I... AM THE
ONLY MAN THAT CAN
SUCCESSFULLY PER-
FORM IT!

HOLY HECK! I'VE GOT TO BE SOME FAVORITE-GEAR STUDENT
HER! ARNOLD CERTAINLY WAS IN A HORRIBLE PREDICA-
MENT.

DOCTOR MANNING,
WHAT ABOUT BOSTON
JEROME? HE CLAIMS
THAT A TUMOR GROWTH
CAN BE CONTROLLED BY...

NO, HE'S A MAD-MAGAZINE
EL TO FATHER-SUPER...

HOLY HECK! I'VE GOT HIM, DEAR READER! HE'S RATHER
DIZZY PRETTY STUBBORN WASN'T HE? WELL, HE
CHANGED HIS MIND! DOCTOR MANNING RECOGNIZED IT
OVER REAL HARD...

WELL, WELL! THE FAMOUS DR.
ARNOLD DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING!
AND TO WHAT DO I OWE THIS
EXTREME PLEASURE...

I'M HERE
PROFESSIONALLY,
DOCTOR JEROME!



DOCTOR LESTER JEROME STOPPED
ASIDE AND DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNERS
ENTERED THE HOT WHITE OFFICE.
ONCE INSIDE, HE EXPLAINED TO
DOCTOR JEROME THE REASON FOR
HIS VISIT. DOCTOR LESTER JEROME
LISTENED QUIETLY, AND THEN, WHEN
DOCTOR MANNERS HAD FINISHED . . .
BURST OUT LAUGHING!

SO THE SURGICAL DOCTOR
MANNERS TEARS TO PERIODICALLY
BOMBARD MANNERS AS
A LAST RESORT ENTITLE, NOT
YOU RELUCTANTLY AGREE
TO GIVE ME A CHANCE,
BUT

WHY SHOULDN'T I LAUGH, ARNOLD?
WHEN LAUREL STOOD BETWEEN LIFE
AND DEATH, IT WAS A BOMB... A
GRATUITOUS BUT INDEFINITE
POINT LIFE IS AT STAKE. YOU COME
LAUGHING? WELL... I CANNOT REFUSE
YOU! IN FACT, IT WILL GIVE ME
A GREAT PLEASURE TO PROVE
THAT I AM CORRECT...



LESTER AND ARNOLD WALKING INTO A DARKLY LIT ROOM.
HE SEATED HIM IN A COMFORTABLE CHAIR AND TRAINED
A SPOTLIGHT ON HIS EYES.

WHAT... WHAT IF I SHOULD DIE
WHILE UNDER YOUR HYPNOTIC
TRANCE, LESTER?

YOU WILL NOT DIE.
ARNOLD, I'LL SEE
TO THAT!



AND WHILE YOU ARE IN THIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE,
ARNOLD, YOU WILL NOT DIE! REMEMBER! YOU
WILL NOT DIE!

I WILL...
NOT... DIE...



SOON DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNERS' EYES OPEN HEAVILY
UNDER THE SPELL OF DOCTOR LESTER'S SOFT VOICE.
IN TOWEE, ARNOLD FELL INTO A DEEP HYPOPTIC
SLEEP...

YOU WILL SLEEP IN THIS STATE
UNTIL I UTTER THE WORD 'LAUREL'.
THEN YOU WILL AWAKEN. DO YOU
UNDERSTAND?



NOW OVER YOUR EYES! YOU WILL SPEAK AND ACT NORMALLY WHILE YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND REMAINS HYPNOTIZED! YOU ARE FREE TO GO HOME BACK IN TWO DAYS!



DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING LEFT DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE AND WALKED THOUGHTFULLY TOWARDS HIS HOME AS HE CIRCLED A BUSY INTERSECTION...



THE SIREN OF THE AMBULANCE SCREAMED THROUGH THE CITY AS ARNOLD MANNING WAS RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL...

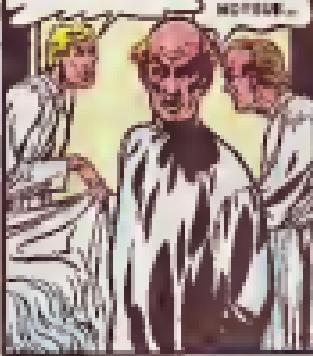
IT'S...
IT'S...
ARNOLD!

GOOD LORD!
HE'S BEEN RUN OVER!

A HURRY EXAMINATION FOLLOWED.

HE'S BEASTLY!
HIS HEART HAS STOPPED BEATING!

WHEEL HIM INTO THE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY...



BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THIS MAN IS DEAD!

LOOK, DOCTOR!
HIS HEART JUST PULSESED!

BUT HIS HEART HAS STOPPED!
HOW CAN A MAN BE ALIVE... MOAN...
MOVE... WHEN HIS HEART HAS STOPPED?

OTHER DOCTORS WERE CALLED IN TO WITNESS THE STRANGE PHENOMENON...

THERE IT IS AGAIN!
A DISTINCT MOAN!

BUT THIS IS A COMA!
WHAT IS THIS?
IMPOSSIBLE!



WHEN DOCTOR MANNING DID NOT RETURN TO DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE IN TWO DAYS, LESTER RUMINATED AT THE HOSPITAL AND LEARNED ABOUT THE ACCIDENT.

AND ALTHOUGH HE IS DECEASED, HE MOVES... BROOKLYN! HE DOES NOT DECAY!

GENTLEMEN! I CAN EXPLAIN...

DOCTOR MANNING CAME TO ME! HE ASKED ME TO CURE A TUMOR BY HYPONOTHERAPY! I PUT HIM IN A TRANCE AND ADVISED HIM THAT HE WOULD NOT DIE WHILE IN THIS HYPONOTIC STATE! SO... HE CANNOT DIE UNTIL I RELEASE HIM! NOR WILL HE DECAY OR FADE OR ANY OF DEATH'S CHARACTERISTICS!

PUPPY-GOON? FOOLISHNESS! OH! YOU DON'T SEE THEM? POSSIBLY IT WAS GENTLEMAN'S GOOD DAY!

A MONTH WENT BY! THEN TWO MONTHS! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING REMAINED IN THE SAME CONDITION! THEREFORE, DAY, THE HOSPITAL SUMMONED DOCTOR LESTER JEROME. YESTERDAY, DOCTOR MANNING REMAINED CONSCIOUSNESSLESS! WE X-RAYED AND FOUND THAT HIS GENERAL TUMOR HAS ALMOST ENTIRELY DISAPPEARED! HIS HEART STILL BEATS! BUT HE IS IN TERRIFIC PAIN!

BOOOGIE! TAKE ME TO HELL

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME STARED AT THE WITCHED ARNOLD MANNING.

HELP! MR. JESTER! THE PAIN IN MY HEART IS SOMETHING! THESE... TELL ME... THAT... IF ALL MEDICAL TREATMENTS ARE DEAD, I AM DEAD!

YES, ARNOLD! YOU'VE BEEN DEAD FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS! I'VE SENT YOU FROM DEATH THROUGH HYPNOTHERAPY! YOUR TUMOR IS GONE, YET YOU SIE... I SHOULD HAVE SAID LAUGHING... I... WAIT... THE...

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME HAD UTTERED THE WORD "LAUGH", THE WORD THAT WOULD RELEASE ARNOLD MANNING FROM HIS HYPONOTIC TRANCE! THE SICKENED DOCTORS WATCHED, HORRIFIED, ARNOLD FELL BACK LIMPLY ON THE BED! HIS EYES SHUTFIELD, AND TURNED FROM PINK TO BLUE TO A SICKENING BROWN! HIS EYES sank DEEP INTO HIS HEAD! THEN THEY BECAME HOLLOW BLACK SPOTS! THE FLESH, ROTTED AND DECAYED, FELL FROM HIS BODY! SOON, THE BED WAS COVERED WITH NOTHING BUT A SICKENING LOGUE OF PUTRID AND DECAYED FLESH...

HUH-HUH! SO ARNOLD FINALLY GAINED UP WITH HIMSELF! WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIMSELF ANYWAY? WELL... HOW LONG CAN A DEAD MAN STAY OFF DEATH, ISN'T IT? SOONER OR LATER! OF COURSE, WITH ARNOLD IT HAD TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME! TOO BAD ARNOLD DON'T LISTEN TO LESTER, ANYHOW! MAYBE HE WOULDN'T HAVE MADE SUCH A JAWFUL MESS OF HIMSELF, ANYHOW. NOW I'LL TELL YOU OVER TO THAT PARROT OF MARY TALES... THAT HADLY... REOPENED!

CLOSE THE DAY! IF YOU WANT A PHOTO OF ME IN THE FLESH, READ THE CHIFFRE-KEEPER'S CORNER!



CURSE!

He patted the gun-holster at his side; it reassured him and he pressed on through the matted undergrowth of the jungle. It couldn't be much further, he reflected . . . according to the map the site was a mile east of the River of Doom.

Imagine those idiots back in Port Au Prince, he chuckled, as he hacked his way forward. Isn't it just like these Haitians . . . falling for every VooDoo story they hear! They're positive that a fortune in jewels is hidden in this crumbling dump, yet no one has the guts to trek through the jungle after it, just because there's supposed to be a deadly curse on the house where the stuff is hidden! He patted the heavy revolver at his side once again. His gun would take care of any curse careless enough to try to keep him from getting his hands on that treasure! Let the Haitians beware of the curse they dreaded . . . the gun at his hip made him safe from this outlandish VooDoo superstition!

The clearing opened with unexpected suddenness in front of him, and under the dripping centuries-old trees he saw the dilapidated house they had described to him. It was ghostly, with that vapor seeming to rise from its sides, he thought, moving cautiously toward the sagging front door and into the dark building. He froze in his tracks immediately. Someone was seated in a chair in the center of the floor, staring off into the murkiness of the room. Quietly, taking great pains not to make a sound,

he drew the revolver from its holster, took aim and fired at point-blank range.

Three shots rang out, and he smiled grimly as he moved toward the crumbling cabinets along one of the walls. He wasn't considered a dead-shot for nothing! He hadn't expected to find anybody sitting here and guarding that fortune in jewels . . . but he had taken care of whoever it was, anyway! The curse be damned!

The cabinets were full of sparkling jewels . . . there was a king's ransom tucked away in this hovel, his lot the taking! Suddenly the floor creaked behind him and he whirled, his hand gripping the revolver. The chair in which he had left his victim . . . it was empty! And by the glittering light of the gems he could see that there was no pool of blood where there should have been one! His head moved slightly as he slipped the safety catch on his revolver and he saw approaching . . . slowly, ominously, as if there was all eternity to accomplish its task . . . a being with the bloodless look of something long dead! Twice he fired the gun, almost convulsively . . . and still the creature kept advancing, never wavering, never altering its funereal pace!

In the next instant the truth burst in upon him in a wave of panic. This curse he had heard whispered about at Port Au Prince . . . it was one of the Walking Dead! THAT was why no one would accompany him on his trek . . . they knew that bullets were pathetically useless against one of the dreaded creatures!

And now the curse was reaching out and touching him, and a chill such as he had never before felt was moving down his body. It was all over, he knew, in his last moment of consciousness! He had been claimed, body and soul, by a ZOMBIE!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

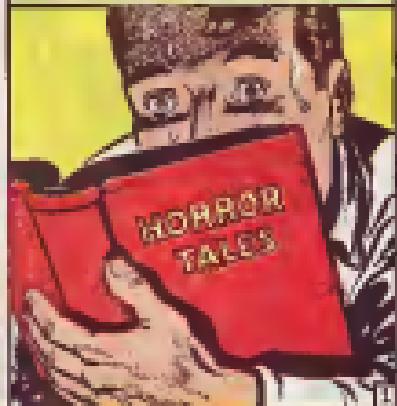


HELLO, AGAIN, YOU LITTLE MONSTERS! I GUESS YOU'VE BEEN EXPECTANTLY WAITING FOR THIS LATEST TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF HORROR STORIES! WELL, HEHHEH... I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU THIS TIME I'LL TELL YOU A TRULY APPREHENSIVE YARN. SO GET A STRONG HOLD ON YOUR STOMACH HERE! I CALL IT

MIDNIGHT SNACK!



SCENE: THE HOME OF DUNCAN REYNOLDS! TIME: MIDNIGHT!



BONG
BONG BONG
BONG BONG
BONG BONG BONG
BONG BONG BONG
BONG BONG BONG



MIDNIGHT! GRR-R! THESE HORROR STORIES (YAWN-N) CERTAINLY GIVE A PERSON SOOKE-PIMPLES!



...DUGHT TO GO TO BED? YAWN-N-N! FEEL TIRED? BUT MAYBE I BETTER HAVE A SNACK FIRST! I DON'T REALIZE I WAS SO HUNGRY! (YAWN!)



HEY! WHAT THE HELL DID I GET HERE? LAST THING I REMEMBER, I... OH, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? I WANT TO BE HERE! SOMETHING TELLS ME I SHOULD BE HERE!



JOH! I'M SO HUNGRY, MY STOMACH RUMPS! I BETTER GET SOME FOOD!



HEN, HEN! DUNCAN SURVEYS THE DESERTED STREET, AND ON THE CORNER HE SEES...

A RESTAURANT? I'M IN LUCK! I HOPE IT'S STILL OPEN FOR BUSINESS!



AM IT AS OPEN?





HEH! HEH! POOR DURHAM! HE WANTS SO MUCH TO EAT SOMETHING... ONLY HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT IS THAT HE WANTS! ANYWAY, HE STUMBLIES OUT INTO THE STREET AND SPENDS SEVERAL MINUTES THERE, REGAINING HIS COMPOSURE...



EVERYTHING SEEMS SO
CONFUSED TONIGHT! I... I
DON'T WANT TO GO HOME, BUT
SOMETHING... SOMETHING
WON'T LET ME! I...
CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF...



BLACKNESS CLOUDS HIS EYES AND MIND HE FEELS HIMSELF FLOATING IN A WHIRLING VOID. AND THEN, SUDDENLY, IT IS OVER...

WHAT THE HELL A CEMETERY!
HOW DID I GET HERE? WHERE'S THE RESTAURANT AND THIS SHOVEL? HOW DID I GET THIS SHOVEL?



NOW I KNOW WHY I HAVE THIS SHOVEL! BECAUSE I HAVE TO DIG UP THIS - THE GRAVE! THIS BRAND NEW GRAVE!



BEWILDERED, AND DRIVEN BY A FURY HE CANNOT RESIST, DUGGING AGAIN AND AGAIN ZIGS DEEPER INTO THE EARTH!



SUDDENLY, A SPARK OF REALIZATION BEEPS INTO HIS CONSCIOUSNESS... A REALIZATION OF WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO DO!

GOOD LORD! I MUST BE INSANE! WANTING TO... TO... NOT NOW DON'T LET ME DO IT!!



AGAINST HIS WILL, HE ENTERS THE CEMETERY AND GOES FROM ONE GRAVE TO ANOTHER...

WHAT AM I DOING? WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR? HAVE I GONE CRAZY? WAIT! THIS GRAVE? A RECENT ONE!



FINALLY THE COFFIN IS DUG. THE LID RAISED...

AND HERE IT IS! HERE IS WHAT I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR ALL EVENING!



OH PLEASE! PLEASE! DON'T MAKE ME DO IT! BUT... BUT I HAVE TO... SOMETHING'S FORCING ME TO... OH-N-I... I FEEL DIZZY AGAIN...



HOO, HEEH AGAIN THE EMPTY TERRIFYING BLACKNESS SURROUNDS HIM, AND WHEN HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS...

HHEH..WHAT I MUST HAVE PASSED OUT AGAIN! I...I FEEL SO STRANGE! I...GOOD LONGBEFORE THE GORRIE! WHAT HAVE I DONE?!



PEOPLE! A CROWD OF PEOPLE... WITH TORCHES! THEY'RE AFTER ME... COMING THIS WAY!



TIRING UNDER THE CORPSES WEIGHT AS HE DODGES AND WEAVES THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD, DUNCAN SUDDENLY TRIPS AND FALLS!



HE STARES, HORRIFIED, AT THE MUTILATED, PARTIALLY DEVOURED BODY BEFORE HIM...

I...I JARRED NOT TO DO IT! I JARRED BUT THE CRAVING WAS TOO STRONG! I...WHAT'S THAT ROBERT?



THEY WANT TO TAKE AWAY MY FOOD! BUT I WON'T LET THEM! I'LL RUN AWAY WITH IT!



THEY'VE SEEN ME!...HAVE TO RUN FASTER! I'LL HIDE MY FOOD! MUSTN'T LET THEM CATCH ME!



AN ETERNITY SEEMS TO PASS, BUT FINALLY HIS EYES FLICKER AND OPEN...

WHEE, I'M BACK HOME! WHERE...WHERE'S THE GRAVEYARD...THE CORPSE! OH...I GET IT NOW! HUH! I'VE BEEN HERE ALL THE TIME! MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP! I'VE ONLY BEEN DREAMING!



HOWDY! WHAT A NIGHT -
MADE THAT WISI DREAMING
I WAS A HAPPY FOLK! HOW
FANTASTIC! LAST TIME I'LL
EVER READ HORROR STORIES
BEFORE GOING TO BED!

SAY, IT'S LATE? MUST HAVE
DOZED FOR SEVERAL HOURS!
HO-HUM, GUESS I'LL FIX
SOME COFFEE AND HIT
THE SACK!

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT
THAT DREAM I HAVE TO
LAUGH! NEVER THOUGHT
HORROR TALES WOULD
AFFECT... SAY... WHAT THE...

THAT'S STRANGE! WHAT ARE ALL THE SHELVES
AND FOOD FROM THE REFRIGERATOR DOING
ON THE TABLE? I DON'T
REMEMBER PUTTING
THEM THERE!

PORPLEXED, DUNCAN OPENS THE REFRIGERATOR
DOOR... AND OUT TUMBLE A PARTHALEAF
EATER COFFEE!

STUNNED BY HIS DISCOVERY, HE STARES AT
THE GROSSOME SIGHT AND SUDDENLY HE REAL-
IZES... THIS COFFEE! IT'S THE ONE IN MY
DREAM! ONLY NOW I KNOW IT... IT
WASN'T A DREAM IT WAS TRUE! I
ACTUALLY DID WHAT I THOUGHT I
DREAMED! I... I'M... I'M A GHOUl!

HOOHHEH! HOOH THE MORAL OF THIS TALE IS:
"HE WHO EATS AND RUNS AWAY, WILL LIVE TO
EAT ANOTHER DAY!" HEH! ISN'T THAT SILLY?
WHO EVER HEARD OF EATING A SWIF? DUNCAN
CERTAINLY WOULDN'T! IT'S TOO BAD HE TRAPPED
AND FELL IN THE CEMETERY... BUT THAT'S WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN YOU CARRY AROUND TOO MUCH
DEAD MEATHEH! HEH! HEH!
HEH! AND NOW, I'LL TURN
YOU BACK TO MY FELLOW
GHOUЛUMATIC, THE GRUFF-
KEEPER!

-THE END-

It was a diabolical plot! Ralph was sure Cora would be...

SCARED TO DEATH!



Rico

CORA CLUTCHED HER SHAWL TIGHTLY AROUND HER THROAT AND STARED HORRIFIED INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE HALLWAY BEHIND HER ROOM! RALPH, HER MURDERER, GRASPED THE ARM OF HER WHEELCHAIR, STARTING HER...

WE... HE'S COMING, CORA! YOUR UNCLE'S COMING FOR US!

NO, NO, RALPH! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

CORA'S FACE WAS WET WITH PERSPIRATION! HER HAND TREMBLED... THE NAILBITES WHITENED... AS SHE DREW HER SHAWL PROTECTIVELY ABOUT HER! RALPH SHRIEKED SLIGHTLY AS HE WATCHED HER REACTION! IT WAS GOING TO WORK! IT HAD TO!

LITTLE CORA! LISTEN! HIS FOOTSTEPS... ON THE STAIRS! HE'S COMING TO AVENGE HIS MURDER!

STOP IT, RALPH!
STOP IT...



TEARS FILLED CORA'S EYES! THEY SPILLED OVER THE BRIM OF HER EYELIDS AND RAN CRUENTLY DOWN HER CHEEKS! SHE BEGAN TO SOB... HEAVEN SOBS THAT WRACKED HER BODY AND SHIFTED HER WHEELCHAIR.

"REMEMBER, CORA? REMEMBER THE NIGHT WE KILLED HIM?"

CORA GASPED! RALPH CRASHED INTO HERSELF! POOR CORA! "ONE MORE HEART ATTACK WILL SURELY KILL HER!", THE DOCTOR HAD TOLD RALPH.

REMEMBER,
CORAL WE DID
IT... FOR HIS
ARMORITY?"

"...PLEASE, RALPH!
SOB... SOB. PLEASE.
DON'T..."

AS RALPH WATCHED CORA, HIS THOUGHTS WENT BACK... BACK OVER THE LONG MONTHS TO THE MISHMASH IT HAD ALL STARTED AT A COCKTAIL PARTY GIVEN BY HER UNCLE IN CORA'S HONOR...

"FORGET IT,
RALPH! CORA'S
UNCLE DON'T
KNOW YOU WERE
VISITING ME!"



Ralph smiled to himself as he watched Cora go away in her wheelchair. Yet that was when he had first met her.

"HELLO, FRANK! WHAT'S THE PRETTY ONE..."

"THAT'S YOUR HOSTESS,
CORA WEATHERBY! SHE
SEES ALL THIS WHEN
THE OLD MEEDER ORGANIZERS
GOLE HER..."

SOLID MONEY! ALL OF ALIX WEATHERBY'S WEALTH
WOULD BE CORA'S SOME DAY! SUDDENLY IT HAD COME
TO RALPH... THE WHOLE PLAIN...

"OH, YES! SURE,
RALPH! I'M NOT
WORKING..."



THERE WAS A HOME BELOW! CORA JUMPED, GASPING FOR BREATH! RALPH CRIED HER. HER CHALK-WHITE SKIN HAD WRINKLED FOREHEAD SHE WASN'T PRETTY ANYMORE! NOT AS SHE HAD BEEN WHEN HE HAD FIRST SEEN...

WELL, YOU MARRY ME—DRAP I KNOW WE'VE ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER A SHORT TIME, YET.

OH, RALPH! DO YOU REALLY WANT ME?

AGAIN RALPH LAUGHED SILENTLY! CORA... ALMOST THE PURPLED! LIKE NOW... CRIMSON... BURNING! THE BILLY POOL! HE HAD WANTED HER UNCLE'S MONEY... NOT HER...

THEIR... YOU... YOU'LL SAY YES?

OF COURSE, DARLING! OF COURSE I'LL MARRY YOU!

NOT THAT CORA HAD BEEN SO BAD TO LOOK AT EACH OTHER YET TO RALPH, EXPERIENCED WORLDLY BURN. THE MONEY HAD MADE HER MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE...

OH, CORA... OH, RALPH! I'M SO HAPPY...

THE WIND OUTSIDE CORA'S BEDROOM BRISTLED THROUGH THE TEEPEE AGAIN! ANOTHER NOISE... ANOTHER GASP! RALPH WATCHED HER CLOSELY. SHE WAS BREATHING HEAVIER, MORE PAINFULLY...

WHAT WAS THAT, CORA? NO... ANOTHER POSTURE! IT WON'T... ON THE STAIRS... IT CAN'T BE...

AND THEN THE WEDDING! RALPH ESPECIALLY REMEMBERED THE WEDDING! HOW HE HAD SLIPPED THE RING ON HER FINGER, SAYING THE WORDS... BUT THINKING...

WITH THIS RING... YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WILL INHERITANCE!

AN, THE MONEY! NOT THE BRAVE TO EUROPE... OR THE OLD MAN'S MONEY...

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MOON TONIGHT! LOVE ME, DARLING!

WITH ALL MY HEART, CORA!

AND THEN THOSE ROTTEN MONTHS AT THE PLANT! BORROW, LIE, AND OTHER LABOUR, IN THE OLD MAN'S PLANT...

GOT TO START AT THE BOTTOM, DON'T SOMETHING THIS PLANT WILL BE CORA'S... AND YOU'LL HAVE TO RUN IT

OF COURSE, UNCLE ALF! I UNDERSTAND! I WANT TO LEARN!



WANTED: IT'S RALPH HAD ANTIDED IT HATED EVERYTHING ABOUT ME AND THEN IT HAS COME TO HIM! THE PERFECT SOLUTION...



IT HAD BEEN PATIENCE AND INGENUITY.

ND COLORFUL FIGHT BY DREW BATTLES!

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HIS ACTION! I REALLY CAN'T!

HE HAD HAD TO USE CAREFUL TIMING, PSYCHOLOGY...

...CALLED ME A 'GOLD-DIGGER' & ACCUSED ME OF BEATING YOU FOR YOUR INDEPENDENCE!

AND THE MATERIAL OLD...

YES! THE NEXT FEW MONTHS HAD BEEN TOUGH ON RALPH! HE HAD HAD TO BE ON HIS TOES! CONVINCING SOPH WASN'T EASY...

AND...

OH, RALPH, DEARLIE! I'M SO SORRY! I'LL TALK TO HIM.

...THEN, IN FRONT OF THE MEN, HE DISCLOSED ME... CALLED ME AN INCOMPETENT... A ROAMSWALL?



A FURTHERMORE... THAT'S WHAT SOPH HAD ALWAYS BEEN! AT FIRST SHE HAD VIOLENTLY DISLIKED, BUT SOON... SHE HAD RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED...

WHY NOT? IT'S POOR MONEY, NIGHTMARE! HE'S OLD! HE'S LIVED HIS LIFE! IT'LL BE EASY...

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! WE'LL KILL HIM!

AND SO, ONE NIGHT, AN OLD UNCLE ALICE WENTWORTH HAD BEEN STROLLING NEAR THE FORD ON HIS VAST ESTATE...



THEY HAD PUT HIM, UNCONSCIOUS,
FACE DOWN IN THE POND.

"IT'LL LOOK LIKE I SHOT RALPH!"
HE FELL STRUCK TO THE GROUND.
"I'M AFRAID...
HE HURT ME AND
DROWNS!"

LATER THAT NIGHT THEY HAD
CALLED THE POLICE

"YES! HE WENT OUT
ABOUT THREE HOURS
AGO... AND HASN'T
COME BACK!"

THE POLICE HAD COME... HAD
SEARCHED THE GROUNDS... AND
FOUND HIM

"POOR OLD BOB!
SLIPPED AND
FELL INTO IT!"

"WELL, LET'S GET
HIM INSIDE!"



"YES, THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING WITH IT!" CORA INHERITED THE
MONEY BUT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO HER! PERHAPS
IT WAS HER CONSCIENCE INFORCING HER ANYWAY TO WANT
TO RETURN THE MONEY. LOST WEIGHT AND RAPIDLY

"CORAL! YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING
TERRIBLE, LATELY! YOU'VE GOT
TO FORGET ABOUT IT, DO
YOU HEAR?"

"I CAN'T, RALPH!"

"SOBE IT, RALPH!"

SHE HAD GROWN NERVOUS... FRIGHTENED! SHE'D JUMP
AT EVERY SOUND! THEN SHE'D HAVE HER HEART ATTACK...

"SHE'S A SICK WOMAN, RALPH!" ANOTHER ATTACK WILL
SURELY KILL HER! SHE
MUST TAKE IT VERY
EASY..."

"I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR!"



AND SO THE IDEA HAD COME TO RALPH! WITH CORA
DEAD, THE BEAVERBERRY FORTUNE WOULD BE ALL
ALL OF IT! AND CORA WOULD BE LEFT OVER...

"BOOB BOOB!"

"WHAT'S WHAT IS IT,
RALPH?"

"I... I THOUGHT I SAW HIS FACE...
SMILE ALMOST FAD... STARING
AT US, THROUGH THE WINDOW!"

"NO! YOU'RE JOKING...
BOOB, WITH ME?"



THE WIND SLAMMED A SHUTTER DOWNWARDS AND RALPH DRAINED OUT OF HIS REVERIE! CORA, STILL TREMBLING, WAS STARING INTO THE DARKENED HALLWAY...

WHAT... WAS THAT?
ANOTHER FOOTSTEP?

WHO...? I...

RALPH SMILED! THIS NIGHT... THE WIND... EVERYTHING HAD BEEN PERFECT! 'I SHOULD HAVE BEEN AN ACTOR', HE THOUGHT! ANY MOMENT NOW... ANY MOMENT HER POUNDING HEART WOULD FAIL...

HE'S COMING... CORA! DON'T YOU HEAR HIM?

YES... I...

SUDDENLY HER EYES SEEMED TO POP OUT OF HER HEAD! RALPH WAITED! 'THIS IS IT, AT LAST', HE THOUGHT! SHE HEAVED A FINAL WRETCHED GASP AND DOUBLED UP...

CORAA!

RALPH BENT OVER HER! SHE WAS DEAD...

PEEP
COOM!
POOOL! DOOR
COOM!

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A FLOW IN THE DARKENED HALLWAY...

WHAT WAS THAT?

CREAK

IT CAME THROUGH THE DOOR! IT WAS BENT OVER...
LIKE AN OLD MAN...

A-ALEX!

THE STENCH OF GRAVE-MOLD FILLED THE ROOM...

KEEP AWAY!
KEEP AWAY
FROM ME!

THE THING REACHED OUT ITS ROTTED ARMS FOR RALPH... MOVING TOWARD HIM...



THE CLOTHING HUNG IN SHREDS FROM ITS MARSH-MALLOW-LIKE BODY. RALPH GLARED AT ITS FACE AND PIECES OF DEAD-FOLIAGE-SMELLING FLESH CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS...



IT LIFTED HIM IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP AND CARRIED HIM DOWN THE STAIRS... THE ODDS OF GREAT BURNED RALPH'S SURVIVAL AS HE STRUGGLED FOR AIR...



THE THING WAS STRONG! IT HELD HIM FIRMLY. IT STUMMLED OUT ACROSS THE WELL-KEPT LAWNS AND DOWN THE GLEAS TO THE POND. RALPH BEGAN TO SCREAM...



IT STEPPED INTO THE POND... WADING OUT TO THE MIDDLE! THE POND BOTTOM WAS SOFT OUT THERE... LIKE SOUP! AND RALPH'S SCREAMING WAS WILD... ALMOST ANIMAL-LIKE...



THE THING STOOD RIGID... THERE IN THE CENTER OF THE POND... CLUTTERING THE STRUGGLING RALPH SLOWLY, THEY BEGAN TO SINK... DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE SOFT MUD...



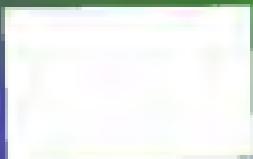
DOWN... DOWN... UNTIL ONLY RALPH'S UPSTRETCHED HAND REMAINED ABOVE THE SURFACE...



AND THE LIGHT THAT DISAPPEARED INTO THE MUD?



The Crypt Keeper



PAPERCUTZ

PROUDLY PRESENTS THE SORID
SECOND ISSUE OF THE ALL-NEW...

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES



RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN,
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PAPERBACKS
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TALES

FROM THE

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FEATURING...



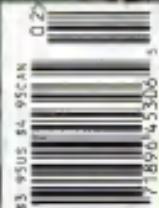
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME TO MY "OPEN CRYPT".
BOILS AND GHOULS SINCE SHAVING
OUT THE OLD WITCH AND THE VAULT-
KEEPER I'VE BEEN LOOKING TO RENT
OUT MY TOMB-WITH-A-VIEW!

MY ONLINE POST ON CRAZED'S LIST HAS
GOTTEN TERRIFIC RESULTS! JUST LOOK AT
ALL THESE APPLICANTS DYING TO RENT
SPACE IN MY COZY CRYPT!
REMINDS ME OF A
TALE I CALL...

The
TENANT



NUMBER 613 UBER AVENUE HAS BEEN BETTER DAYS.

THROUGH GRIMY WINDOWS, ITS TENANTS WATCH SNOWFLAKES COVER THE STREETS WITH A FINE WHITE COAT, KNOWING THAT THE SNOW HERALDS A COLD THAT WON'T BE HELD BACK BY SHODDY INSULATION AND IRREGULAR BLASTS OF HEAT.

YES, LIFE AT 613 UBER AVENUE IS HARD IF YOU ASK ANYONE... ANYONE EXCEPT JAMES WINCHELL, ITS CHEAPSKEATE LANDLORD.

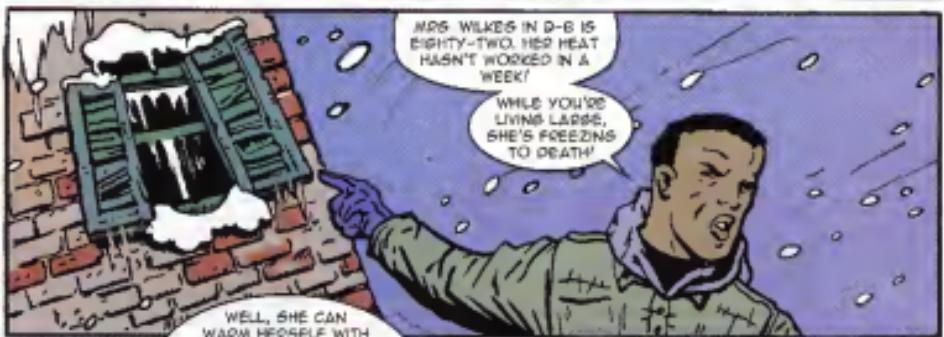
'EVY WHEN YOU SONNA FIXXA HEAT?
AIN'T BEEN WORKIN' FOR DAYS!

--TWO-YEAR
LEASE AND YOU
WANT TO RAISE US
BY THIRTY PEE-
CENT?

MISTER
WINCHELL! WE BEEN
WAITIN' ONNA NEW
FRIDGE FOR A
WEEK!

PEOPLE,
PEOPLE--

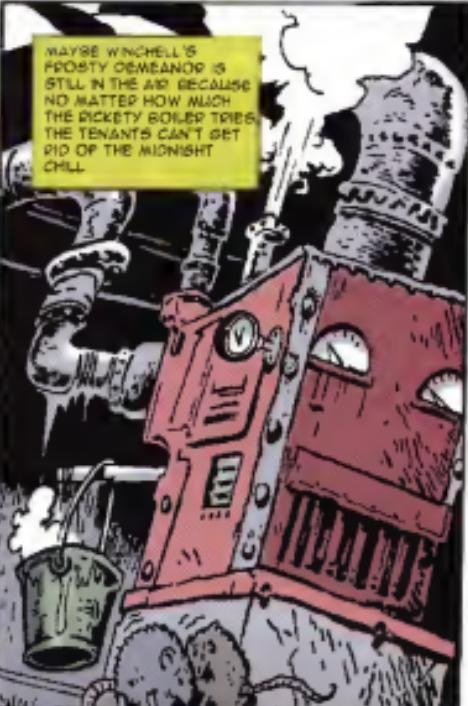






THAT NIGHT, THE BOILER AT 813
SEED AVENUE IS IN PARE FORM.

THE BUILDING'S SYSTEM
USUALLY CIRCULATES
ENOUGH HEAT TO RELIEVE
THE COLD.



MAYBE WINCHELL'S
FROSTY Demeanor Is
STILL IN THE AIR BECAUSE
NO MATTER HOW MUCH
THE RICKETY BOILER TRIES,
THE TENANTS CAN'T GET
RID OF THE MIDNIGHT
CHILL.



THE TENANTS MAKE DO WITH
COVERS AND LAYERS, HOPING
FOR WARMTH.

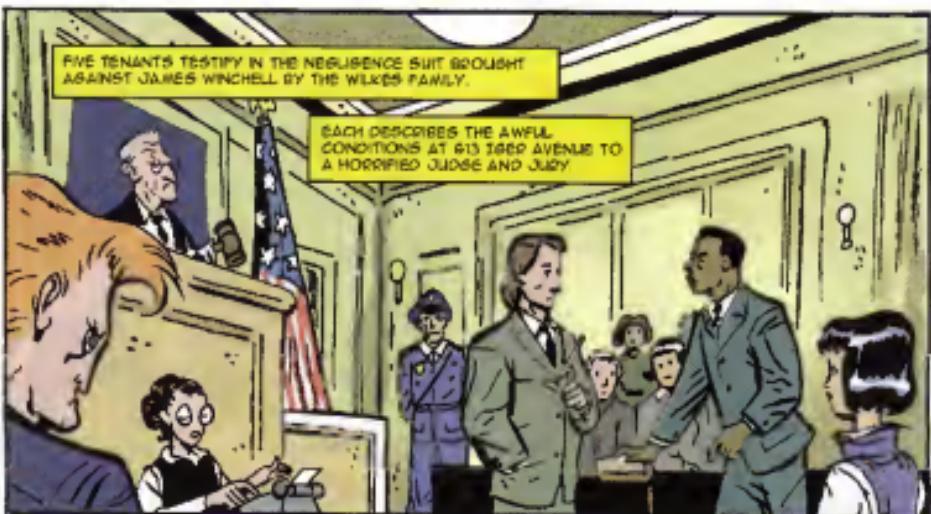


BUT NO AMOUNT OF BLANKETS
CAN SAVE MRS. EUGENIA F. WILKES
IN APARTMENT 9-B.



FIVE TENANTS TESTIFY IN THE NEGLIGENCE SUIT BROUGHT AGAINST JAMES WINCHELL BY THE WILKES FAMILY.

EACH DESCRIBES THE AWFUL CONDITIONS AT 613 TARP AVENUE TO A HORRIFIED JUDGE AND JURY.

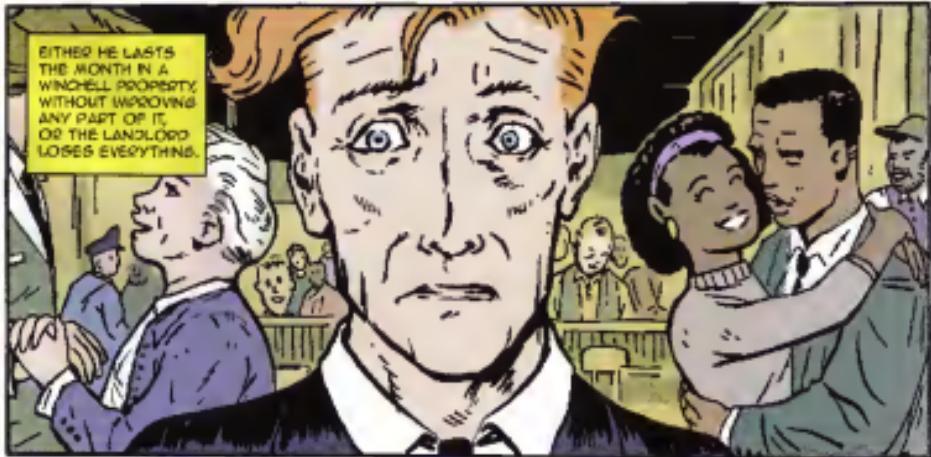


THE JUDGE, MOVED BY THE TESTIMONY AND PHOTOS OF 613 TARP, HANDS DOWN A SPECIAL SENTENCE TO JAMES WINCHELL, CHEAPSKATE LANDLORD.

WINCHELL IS ORDERED TO LIVE IN ONE OF HIS PROPERTIES FOR AN ENTIRE MONTH TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE'S GONE TO HIS TENANTS.



EITHER HE LASTS THE MONTH IN A WINCHELL PROPERTY WITHOUT IMPROVING ANY PART OF IT, OR THE LANDLORD LOSES EVERYTHING.



AS BAD AS 613 EDDIE AVENUE IS, THE BUILDING DOESN'T COMPARE TO NUMBER 666 COLT STREET.

Poorly managed, the two-family Brooklyn home is broken and neglected--

--INCLUDING THE ADJACENT CEMETERY FORGOTTEN BY BUSY RELATIVES AND AVOIDED BY LOCAL GANGS.

NO, AS BAD AS 613 TAPP IS, FRIENDS, 666 COLT STREET IS FAR, FAR WORSE



THE BUILDING IS CURRENTLY EMPTY, AND JAMES WINCHELL IS PROUD THAT HE CONVINCED THE COURT TO INSTALL HIM IN HIS ONLY PROPERTY THAT HAS NO TENANTS.

DESPITE ORDERS NOT TO IMPROVE THE PROPERTY, HE MOVES IN WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART GADGETS AND SEVERAL SPACE HEATERS, AND AS SUCH HIS FIRST FEW DAYS ARE A BREEZE.



BUT ON THE
THIRD NIGHT









CELL PHONE? WHERE'S MY CELL? I CAN'T SEE IN THE DARK AH! HERE'S THE PHONE—I'LL CALL THE COPS!

THE POLICE!
THE POLICE WILL SAVE ME.

SERIOUSLY,
YOU GOT TENANTS
THAT GOT NEEDS.

...NO DIAL TONE.
CELL PHONE,
WHERE DID I PUT IT?

JAMES WINCHELL NEVER FINDS HIS PHONE, NOR DOES HE GET A WINK OF SLEEP.

BAM!
BAM!
BAM!

HIS NEW "TENANTS" KNOCK AT HIS DOOR, EACH WITH HIS OR HER UNIQUE COMPLAINT.

THE KNOCKING GROWS LOUDER AND WINCHELL SHIVERS IN THE DARKNESS, AFFECTED BY THE COLD AND TERROR.

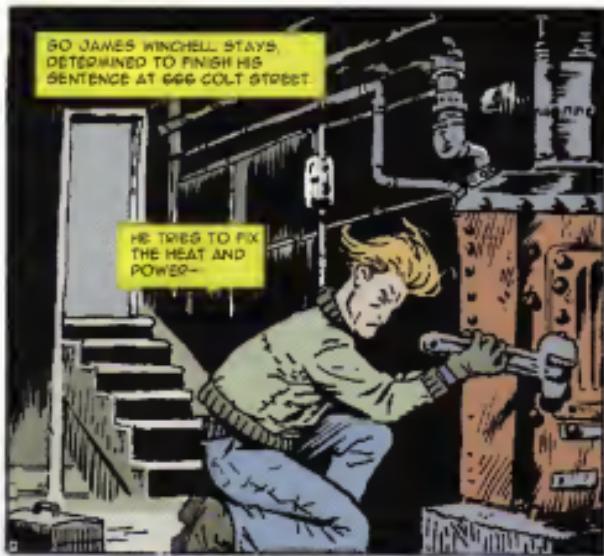
AND IN THE MORNING...

...THE KNOCKING STOPS.



SO JAMES WINCHELL STAYS,
DETERMINED TO FINISH HIS
SENTENCE AT 666 COLT STREET.

HE TRIES TO FIX
THE HEAT AND
POWER—



BUT THE BUILDING IS
IN SUCH DISPAIR
THAT NOTHING WORKS.



AND AS NIGHT FALLS AND
BRINGS THE WINTER CHILL...











AND SO JAMES WINCHELL CLEANS
AND JAMES WINCHELL FIRES

HE REPAINTS HEADSTONES, TILLS
MOSS AND CLEANS EACH GRAVE

HE CLEANS EACH GRAVE AND HOPES THAT
HIS TENANTS WILL LEAVE HIM BE



EACH DAY THE LINE BLUES A LITTLE MORE BETWEEN TENANT
AND LANDLORD AS JAMES WINCHELL ASSUMES HIS FATE
AS BOTH CARETAKER AND LANDLORD TO THE DEAD.

AND SO WE LEAVE JAMES WINCHILL, CHEAPSKATE LANDLORD OF 613 ISER AVENUE AND 888 COLT STREET, MAKING UP FOR A LIFETIME OF POOR CARPTAKING BY FINALLY LEARNING TO DO IT PROPERLY, DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT.

BECAUSE IF HE DOESN'T, LIKE MANY OF HIS PROPERTIES, HE'LL NEVER AGAIN SEE BETTER DAYS.





THE GATE DOESN'T CREAK WHEN YOU OPEN IT. FOR SOME REASON THIS FACT LEAPS OUT AT YOU AS SOON AS YOU ARRIVE. DOESN'T IT, RICHARD?

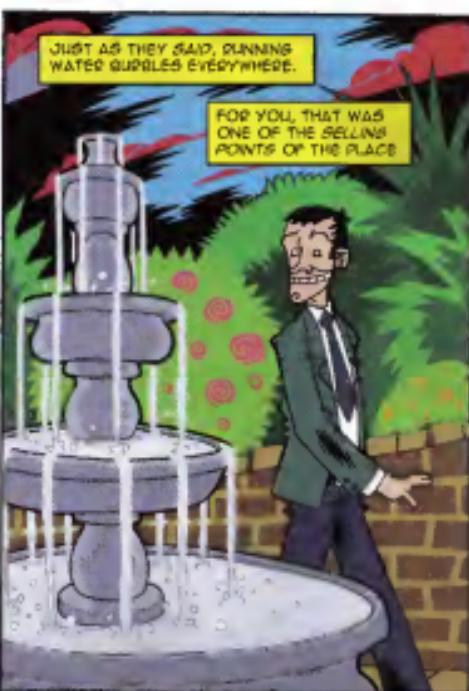
THE HINGES ARE WELL OILED, A FRESH COAT OF PAINT GLISTENS, AND THERE'S NOT A SPOT OF PUFT ON IT.

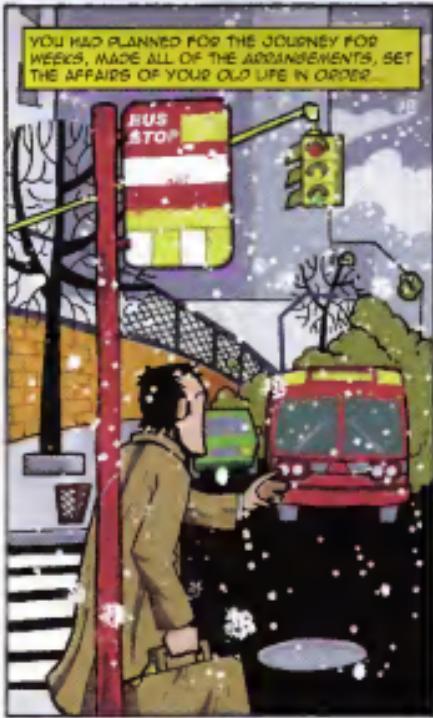


THE SWEETNESS OF WILDFLOWERS BOBBING IN THE SUN TICKLE YOUR NOSE, THE CHIRPS OF TINY SONG-BIRDS COMFORTS YOUR EARS.

THE TREE SQUOOSHES. THEY DROOP WITH FRUIT...













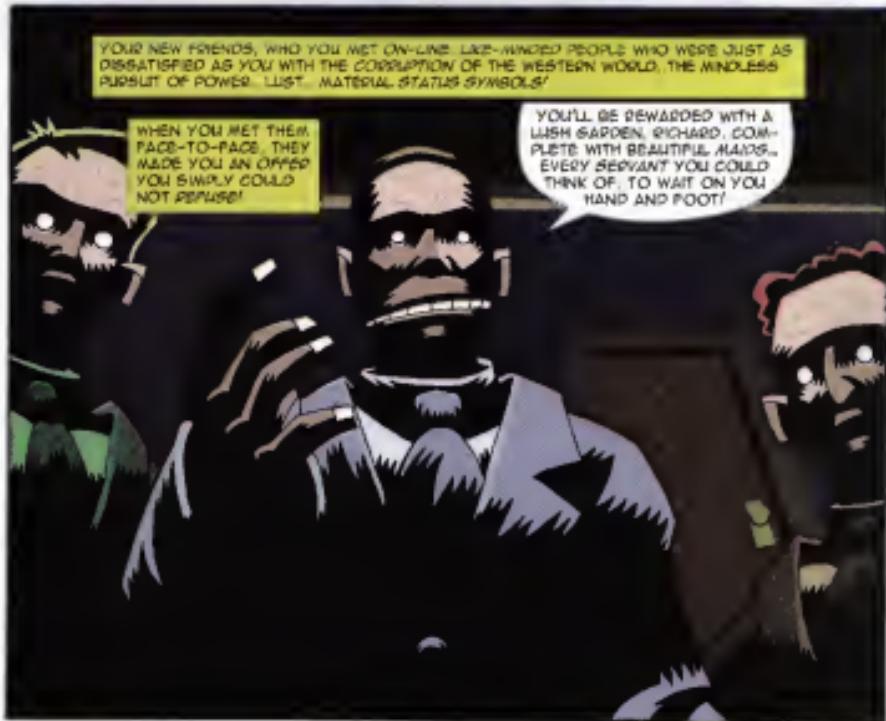


















ESCAPE! THAT'S ALL THAT BURNS
IN YOUR BRAIN NOW!

YOUR DREAMS OF
LUXURY—FORGOTTEN!

PAST STORIES—
CRUMPLED INTO DUST?

NOW THE GATE, WHICH OPENED SO SMOOTHLY
AND QUIETLY WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED, IS
LOCKED FIRMLY SHUT NOW.

...AND WILL NOT SWING, RATTLING HOLLOWLY
NO MATTER HOW FEROCIOUSLY YOU SHAKE,
MOCKING YOUR SUDDEN CHANGE OF HEART!



YOU HAD NO SUCH CHANGE OF
HEART ONCE YOU WERE ACTUALLY
ON THE BUS, THOUGH, DID YOU,
RICHARD?

NO...YOUR NEW FRIENDS HELPED
YOU MAKE THE VIDEO THE NIGHT
BEFORE, THE ONE WHERE YOU
TOLD THE NEWS MEDIA...



AS WELL AS YOUR PARENTS, WHO NEVER QUITE UNDERSTOOD YOU. THE GIRLFRIENDS WHO DRIFTED AWAY FROM YOU AND YOUR COLDNESS...

ALL THE WAY UP TO THE POLITICIANS AND THE GENERALS, THEIR HANDS DRIPPING WITH THE BLOOD OF INNOCENTS.

...THE PURVEYORS OF SHIT THAT PASSES FOR ENTERTAINMENT THESE DAYS...

THE NEIGHBORS WHO SHUNNERED YOU AS SOME KIND OF WEIRDO...THE CO-WORKERS, THE BOSS WHO NEVER SAW YOU AS ANYTHING OTHER THAN A FACELESS DOG...

YOU TOLD THEM ALL IN YOUR VIDEO, DIDN'T YOU, RICHARD? YOU TOLD THEM THE COMMITMENT YOU HAD MADE!

SO YOU COULDN'T LET YOURSELF BE ARRESTED, HOW COULD YOU REPORT YOUR TASK WAS COMPLETED? WITH THAT VIDEO AS CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF YOUR FAILURE?

--THE SHAME THAT YOU HAD BOTCHED THE ONE, SIMPLE DUTY YOUR NEW FRIENDS, YOUR FELLOW WARRIOR HAD ENTRUSTED YOU WITH--

THE HUMILIATION WOULD BE WORSE THAN ANYTHING YOU COULD IMAGINE--



--TO BECOME A
SUICIDE BOMBER







POOR RICHARD—NOT
MORE THAN HE BARGAINED
FOR! BUT I ALWAYS DELIVER
ON MY PROMISES! HERE'S THE
VIEW I PROMISED MY
TENANTS...

IS THAT A
BOMB YOU'RE
WEARING OR ARE
YOU JUST HAPPY
TO SEE ME?

SHE'S
BRINGING
SCARY
BACK!

TIME FOR
THESE SEWER-SIDE
EMBALMERS TO GO BACK
TO THEIR TOMB! SEE
YOU AGAIN SOON!

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Hoh, hoh! Greetings, buddies, welcome to a quaint space-filling tradition called... a LETTERS PAGE. Nowadays, all we get in the mail are bills and ANTHRAX back in the day, fans sent letters opining on our terror jams, and ranked which ones they liked and feared most! Well, "THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER" is back and open for business! Let's start with a couple of initial responses to the online preview of "Body of Work" by Marc Silvestri and Mr. Evox...



Subject: TFTC art?

Wow, after seeing the art examples for your new Tales from the Crypt comic, all I can say is, "OUCH!" I am not commenting on the writing, as the art kept me from taking the time to read any of it. Perhaps you are trying to market this to young kids who have never come in contact with the original comics and reprints.

Regardless... all of the EC FanAddicts I have heard from feel that this stuff is really hard to look at. I have only seen the one artist that you have featured, and if this is the best you can come up with after being in the comics business for decades... I suggest you go to the San Diego Comic Con and try to hire some "real" horror artists. Tomb Tales put out a similar product.... covers by real EC artists and interior pages that were hit and miss. It was a massive failure.

I can't say if you will do well with your product, but if you are counting on true EC fans to buy this stuff, you will probably be disappointed unless you invest in better art. The current art is too childish and the colorist should be painting circus wagons. Horror can be funny, but it needs to look scary.

Respectfully disappointed,

Bill Leisch, Editor/publisher

Horror From The Crypt Of Fear

So, Bill, you're not planning to join the Mr. Evox Fan Club, are you?

Subject: Thanks for ruining one of the greatest horror comics of all time!

This has to be a joke, right? I was very much looking forward to the Tales from the Crypt comic. I looked at the preview art for the book and it's safe to say you destroyed any chance on it being redeeming. I won't be supporting this and I am quite angry another company didn't pick it up. What demographic are you trying to cater too? Abound!!!!

Phil Koels

Why, we want our demon graphics to appeal to all demographics, Phil! Now let's hear from some dead-heads who actually bought our premiere Paperette masterpiece...

Subject: Great To See Tales From The Crypt Is Back... From The Dead

Hey all, I must say I was ecstatic to hear that Tales From The Crypt was being resurrected for a whole new generation to enjoy. I, being a child of the 80's, was not able to enjoy the Crypt's initial run. I was only able to read reprints and watch the television series. That's why when I picked up my first issue of Tales From The Crypt I had a gleam of hope in my eye. I was going to read a Tales From The Crypt that hardly anyone had read yet. Whereas with the reprints nothing was new and exciting anymore because it had been poorly imitated numerous times over. It's just great knowing there is going to be new stories coming from my favorite ghoul, the Crypt-Keeper. Keep up the good work!

Pat
Lockport, IL

Thanks, Pat, for your kind thoughts!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt

Hey and howdy! Just wanted to shoot you a quick double thumbs up on the release of Tales From The Crypt Issue #1 this week. Loved it. Absolutely, wholeheartedly loved it. Takes me back to the good old days of the original series. I had never gotten the opportunity to read them when they were released "live," but I certainly picked them up when I found out about them in later years. During my formative educational "hey, comics are cool" years.

How much did I love this issue? Well, I wrote a review and posted it online:
<http://www.permutedpress.com/index.php/archives/37-Tales-From-The-Crypt-Issue-1-pub-PaperCutz.html>

Hope you like it.
Zombie Zak

Love us or hate us, thanks to everyone who took the time and trouble to write us! Now tell us what you thought of our sickly sinister second issue. Send your letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your crazed commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: salserap@paperette.com.

That's all for now! Don't miss TALES FROM THE CRYPT #3 for more misunderstood madness and possibly even...a lunatic letter from YOU!

THE PHANTOM

Chronicles

coming this summer!



The FIRST PHANTOM ANTHOLOGY!
New Prose stories of the Phantom!

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Steve Szkotak, Clay & Maxx, Steve Bell, Ed Headrick, Nancy Kilpatrick,
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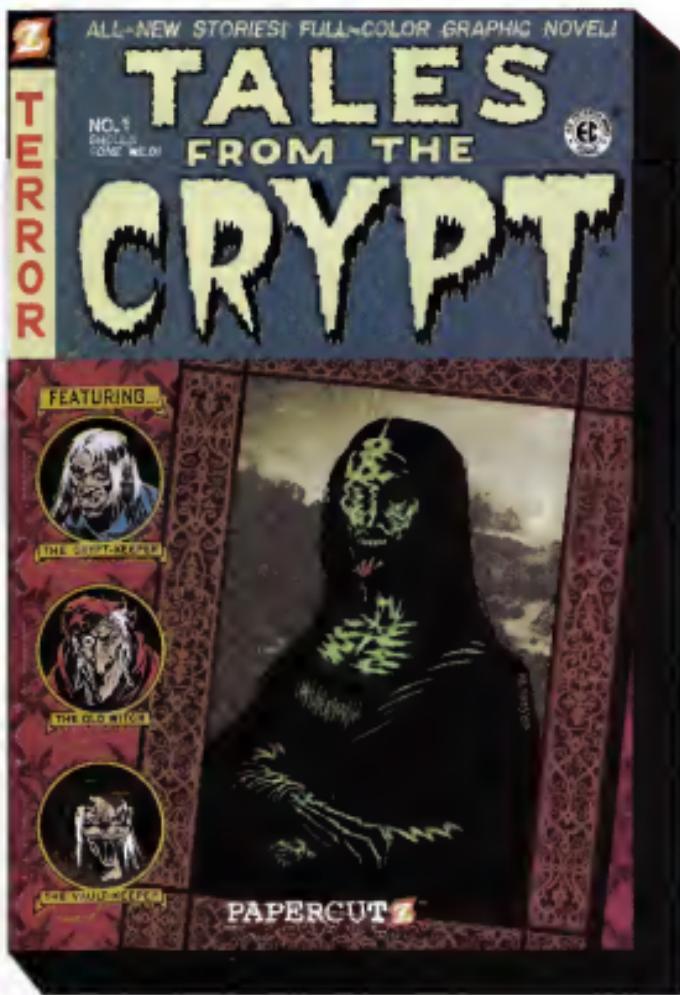
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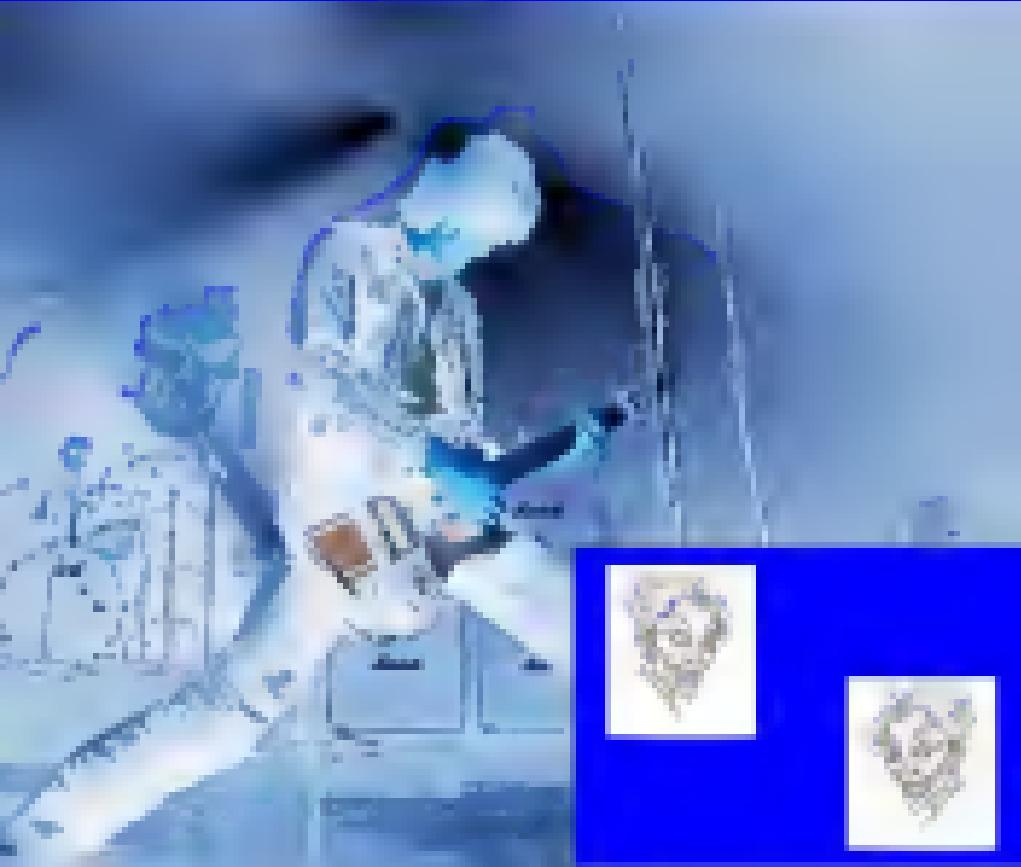
E.C. FANS!

YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!
SO HERE IT IS! THE COLLECTION!
YOU'VE DEMANDED!



COLLECTING STORIES BY MARC BILGREY & MR. EXES, ROB VOLLMAR & TIM SMITH 3, NEIL KLEID & STEVE MANNION - PLUS AN ALL-NEW STORY BY DON McGREGOR & SHO MURASEI

ON SALE OCTOBER AT BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE!



PAPERCUT^Z

PROUDLY PRESENTS THE THIRD
TERRIFYING ISSUE OF THE ALL-NEW...

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES



RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN,
REED CRANDALL, JOHNNY CRAIG, JACK DAVIS, WILL ELDER, GEORGE
EVANS, GRAHAM INGELS, JACK KAMEN, BERNIE KRIGSTEIN, HARVEY
KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANDO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL
WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"A MURDERIN' IDOL"

MORT TODD

WRITER

STEVE MANNION

ARTIST

DIGIKORE

COLOR

MARK LERER

LETTERER

TERRY MANNION



THE PUBLISHER

GHOULUNATICS SEQUENCES

JIM SALICRUP

WRITER

RICK PARKER

ARTIST/TITLE

LETTERER/CO. OR

MARK LERER

LETTERER

STEVE MANNION

COVER ARTIST

JIM SALICRUP



THE OLD EDITOR

Cartoonettes by Rick Parker

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PAPERCUZ
NO. 3
ALL-NEW!

TALES FROM THE CRYPT



\$3.95
\$4.95 CAN

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



A MURDERIN'
IDOL! AS NOT
SEEN ON TV!



WASSUP WITH THE CRYPT-KEEPER?

GLAD YOU AXED! HE'S BEEN READING THE ONLINE REVIEWS OF HIS LATEST CRYPT COMIC HEH HEH!



EITHER HE'S SO SELF-ABSORBED THAT'S HE'S GHULGED HIMSELF TO DEATH OR THE REVIEWS ARE WAY SCARIER THAN HIS STORIES -- HE HASN'T BUDED IN HOURS!

WELL, OLD WITCH, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY-- EC COME, EC GO!

HEY, THAT'LL LOOK GROOVY IN MY VAULT!



OL' C-K REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER DESPERATELY NEEDY NINCOMPOOP NAMED JAYSAN! HE TOO WANTED TO BE LOVED BY MILLIONS! THAT'S WHY JAYSAN HOPED TO BECOME THE POPSTAR IDOL! HERE'S A FRIGHTENING FABLE FROM MY WITCH'S CAULDRON CALLED...

A Murderin'
Idol

AT A RAPID TEN-SECOND
PLATE, A WANNABE SUPER-
STAR HAS OVERSLEPT.

I'M HERE AT
THE FIRST DAY OF
TRYOUTS FOR NEXT
SEASON'S EDITION OF
POPSTAR IDOL--

OH, NOW WHY
DON'T YOU WAKE
ME UP? YOU KNEW
I WANTED TO BE
THERE, GLOOM!

--AS YOU CAN
SEE, THE CROWD IS
IMMENSE! MANY HAVE
BEEN IN LINE FOR DAYS
TO GET THEIR CHANCE TO
AUDITION FOR THE
HIT SHOW!

OH, JAYSAN! LOOK
HOW MANY PEOPLE
ARE THERE! YOU
WON'T HAVE
A CHANCE OF
GETTING IN!

I'VE GOT TO TRY! THIS
IS MY BIG CHANCE TO
BE A SUPERSTAR!

I KNOW I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO
BE THE NEXT IDOL! EVEN THOUGH I
HAVEN'T SUNG PROFESSIONALLY, I'VE
GOT THE LOOKS, THE MOVES AND
AN INCREDIBLE SINGING
VOICE!

MY MOM
TOLD ME
SO!

YOU
SHOULD BE
LOOKING FOR
A REAL JOB
INSTEAD OF
LIVING IN YOUR
FANTASY
WORLD!



DEJECTED BUT DETERMINED,
THE POTENTIAL POPSTAR
WANDERS BACK HOME...

DARN IT! I'M GONNA GET
IN LINE LATER TONIGHT TO
MAKE SURE I GET IN! I'D
SELL MY SOUL TO GET
ON THAT SHOW!

PREOCCUPIED WITH HIS THOUGHTS, HE
DOESN'T NOTICE A LARGE ROCK SLOTTING
HIS PATH AND STUMBLIES OVER IT...



LITTLE REALIZING HOW TRUE HIS STATEMENT IS, HE FLIPS THROUGH THE TOME...

IT'S IN SOME WEIRD LANGUAGE—THOUGH I'M STARTING TO UNDERSTAND IT!



I GUESS IT IS IN ENGLISH AFTER ALL! IT LOOKED FOREIGN AT FIRST, BUT NOW I CAN READ IT! IT'S SOME SORT OF BOOK OF MAGIC SPELLS THAT CAN MAKE ANY WISH COME TRUE!

WELL, I DON'T NEED IT! I HAVE ALL THE RAW TALENT I NEED TO MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE!



HOWEVER, IT COULDNT HURT TO HAVE A LITTLE HELP, I GUESS!



JAYSAN TAKES THE BOOK HOME, AND WHILE GLORIA IS AT WORK, HE PORES THOUGH ITS PRIMORDIAL, YELLOWED PAGES...

ACCORDING TO THIS, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SCRIBBLE SOME STRANGE DOODLES ON THE FLOOR AND PERFORM SOME SORT OF SACRIFICE!



COPYING THE ARCANE FIGURES FROM THE BOOK, HE CONTEMPLATES HIS NEXT STEP.

I'M SUPPOSED TO GIVE A BLOOD OFFERING TO SUMMON A DEMON TO GRANT MY WISH. BUT I CAN'T KILL SOMETHING...OR CAN I? I'VE GOT TO WIN ON POPSTAR IDOLS!



PLACING A MOUSETRAP ON THE PINE, HE LOADS IT WITH HOPS OF PEANUT BUTTER...

GLORIA'S BEEN BUGGING ME ABOUT GETTING RID OF THE MICE IN THE APARTMENT, SO I'LL MAKE HER WISH COME TRUE, TOO!



HIDING IN THE SHADOWS, JAYSAN DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG...

HAD IT WORKED? NOW WHAT?

SNAP!

SQUEEEEEE!!!

BEFORE HIS ASTONISHED EYES, THE DEAD MOUSE IS CONSUMED IN FLAMES AND A STRANGE SMOKE RISES WITH AN OFFENSIVE SULFURIC SMELL!









PULLING FREE FROM JAYSBAN, GLORIA SLIPS ON SOME SOapy WATER AND...



OH, NO! GLORIA! ARE YOU OKAY?



THERE IS NO RESPONSE AS HER LIFELESS BODY STARTS TO IGNITE ON TOP THE DEMONIC SYMBOLS!



A BIGGER DEMON!

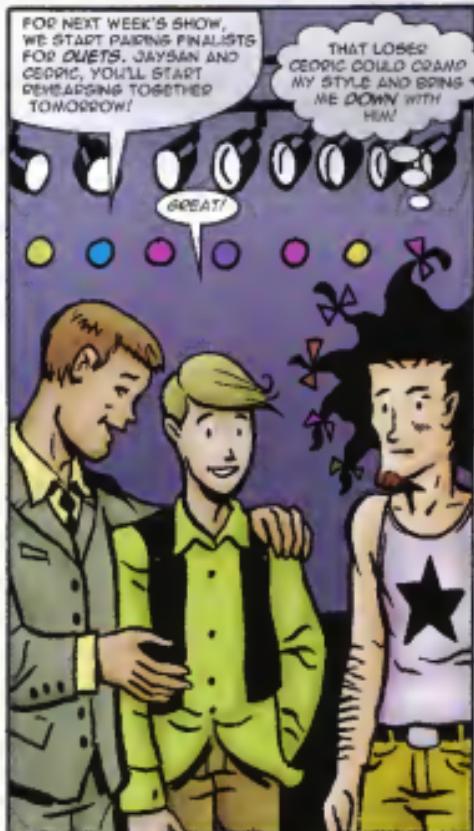
YOU
SUMMONED ME.
WHAT IS YOUR
WISH?











BUT JAYSAN DOES
HAVE HIS DOUBTS

I'LL HAVE TO
MAKE SURE I'LL
MAKE ANOTHER
OFFERING SO BIG
I'LL HAVE
TO WIN!

THE NEXT DAY AT REHEARSAL.

EVEN THOUGH
IT'S EVERY MAN FOR
HIMSELF, GOOD LUCK,
JAYSAN! E--WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?

EH, I'M
AN ARTIST IN MY
SPARE TIME AND THIS
IS A GOOD LUCK
SYMBOL I LIKE
TO DRAW!

HEY, WHATEVER IT'S
KINDA ODD, BUT IF IT
WORKS FOR YOU--

WHOMP!

ACCCK!



O-O-KAY! WELL, IF CEDRIC DOESN'T SHOW UP SOON, HE'S OUT OF THE COMPETITION!

THAT'S A SAFE BET!

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING POPSTAR CONTESTANT MAKES HEADLINES WHICH PUBLISHES JAYSON'S SUCCESS AS THE SHOW MUST GO ON

MYSTERY OF MISSING

CAN J BE #

BACKSTAGE ON THE NEXT TO LAST SHOW.

DO YOU THINK THEY'LL EVER FIND CEDRIC? WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED?

OH, HE PROBABLY COULDN'T TAKE THE HEAT AND FLAKED OUT!

AFTER TONIGHT, ONLY TWO OF YOU WILL BE LEFT! GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL!

LUCK IS FOR LESSER MEN! I DON'T NEED IT!













WHAT COMIC?
I DON'T SEE ANY
COMIC! YOU MUST
BE DREAMING!

NO! PLEASE!
PLEASE! I'M
BEGGING YOU!

DERRICK! GIVE
IT BACK! IT'S MY
FAVORITE, MOST
VALUABLE COMIC
EVER!









**KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK**

COME
ON! COME ON!
I HAVEN'T GOT
ALL NIGHT!



CREAAAACKKK

WELCOME
TO THE HALLOWED
HALLS OF JUSTICE!











NOW LET'S
HAVE A LOOK AT
WHAT YOU'VE
BROUGHT!







GOOD THING YOU
SHOWED ME HOW TO
OPEN IT, HUH?

YOUR SECURITY
BOX WON'T CARE IF
YOUR FINGERPRINT'S
ALIVE OR DEAD!



IN FACT, I BET
NOBODY CARES IF
YOU'RE ALIVE OR
DEAD!





AND WHY'S IT SO
FREAKIN' COLD ALL
OF A SUDDEN?



WHO CARES?
ONCE I SELL THIS,
I'LL BE RICH!
I CAN
EVEN HIRE SOME
GOON TO GET THAT
FREAK RICO OFF
MY BACK!

PURE
EVIL



UH...WASN'T THIS
THE EXIT?







IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
THAT WAS THE OLD
MAN'S FACE!



IT'S SOME KIND
OF TRICK!

THAT'S NOT A WALL!
IT'S SOME KIND OF
PLASTIC!





I MUST BE DREAMING!

ANY SECOND
NOW, I'M GOING
TO WAKE UP! I
KNOW IT!

SOMEONE
WAKE ME UP!

AFTER A LIFETIME OF COLLECTING
HEROES, I FINALLY FIGURED IT WAS
TIME TO COLLECT A FEW VILLAINS
TO BALANCE THINGS!

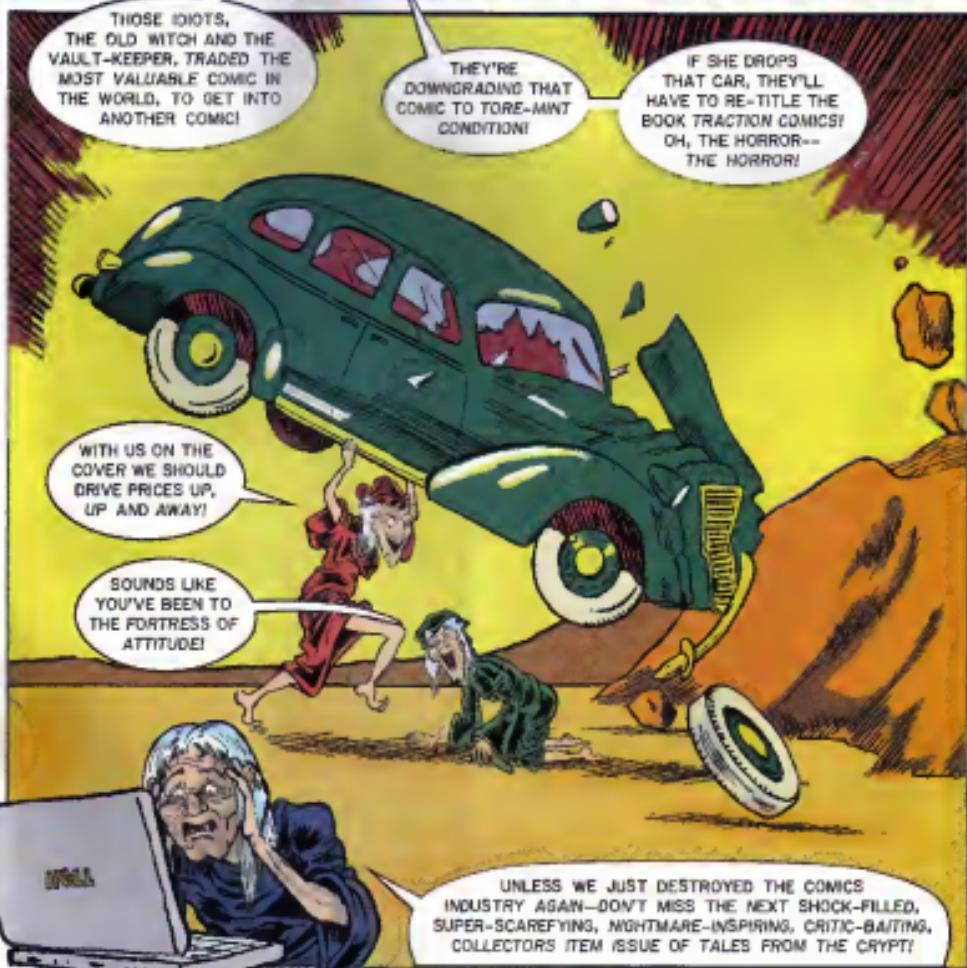
I'D NO
IDEA HOW EASY
IT WOULD BE!

HA-HA-HA-
HEH!

PURE EVIL

NO! PLEASE!
PLEASE! I'M
BEGGING YOU!

THE END





THE CRYPT-KEEPER

Salutations, you CRAZED CONSUMERS of PUTRID PAPERCUTZ PUBLICATIONS! Time once again for our VICIOUS VERBAL exchange, regarding our previous phantasmagorical issue!

But first, here's the SHOCKING results of the voting on TALES FROM THE CRYPT #2! "THE TENANT" by Neil Kleid and Steve Mannion just narrowly beat out "THE GARDEN" by Fred Van Lente and Mr. Eex as BEAST, er, best story!

For any of you FOOLISH FRIGHT-FANS who missed our first two TERROR-FILLED issues, I've got good news for you! Our GREEDY publishers have rushed paperback and hardcover books into print collecting most of those stories - they're cleverly called TALES FROM THE CRYPT #1 "Ghouls Gone Wild!" and it's on sale now at BOOKstores everywhere! There's even an all-new TERROR-TALE by Dan McGregor and Sbo Murase called "RUNWAY ROADKILL" that's to DIE for!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt!!

It's hard to put into words exactly how happy I was to discover that Papercutz is publishing new TFTC comics (and I am NOT a comic book person). I was always a huge fan of the show, but have never had the good fortune to get my hands on one of the movies. So I settled for perusing the guys at my local comic store (mouthing) for anything similar. I managed to find a compilation of "The House of Mystery," but hungered for more. Today, I got it. And I'm sickened. I am dying (ha ha) for the next issue to hit the stands. Thanks so much for resurrecting this awesome comic. I'll be with you guys till the end.

Natalie Vazquez,
Puerto Rico

Just until the end, Natalie? What kind of fickle fan are you?

Subject: New Tales From the Crypt Comics

Haha, I am writing in regards to your new Tales From the Crypt comicbook series. While I appreciate your efforts to revive such a quality publication, I feel that you are going about it incorrectly. You say that you want to keep true to the original, yet you've toned down the content to such a degree, that it doesn't even resemble the horrors from half a century ago. Even though it may seem somewhat tame now, back in the day, Tales From the Crypt was considered very edgy and gory. Had it not been for the atmosphere at the time, it would have been even more visceral. Now, standards are such that you can get away with putting a lot more violent content in comicbooks. By toning down the blood, you are not only abiding by standards that are over half a century old, but you are being less gory than even the original comics were!

I also feel that you do not understand the way Tales from the Crypt "shock" endings work. You acknowledge and utilize shock at the end, but not in the way they were intended. You can't just have some random twist at the end, it has to have a social message to it (a "preachy"). Additionally, the end is typically met with a bloody surprise. This final panel is met with a narrative box that describes the gore-shock in great detail, which gives the reader a better description and creates a sense of uneasiness.

Now we have to talk about the artwork. I don't expect you to mimic the realistic noir-esque panels of the original to a tee, but at least give it a shot. Your artwork in these new comics doesn't even look remotely realistic. It looks like something out of a damn Nickelodeon cartoon!

In closing, I would like to ask you to please reconsider your new vision of these comics or discontinue them and let the crypt rest peacefully while you concentrate on Nancy Drew or something.

Nathan Wakefield

I feel your pain, Nathan. Unfortunately, I'm stuck with Seltzerup as editor!

Subject: TFC Stories

I've read some of the comments about the art seeming like it's geared more towards young children. And while I somewhat agree with that...the stories are quite good and very mature! I thought that they were very nostalgic of the classic EC Tales from The Crypt comics. In the last issue I really enjoyed "The Garden," it kept me guessing all the way 'til the end but "The Tenant" was definitely my favorite. It really reminded me of the typical 'Poetic Justice' that was often dealt from the old Tales from The Crypt stories.

CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!!

Jeremy Seth Brauner
Tustin, CA

No need to wait, Jeremy—it's here!

Subject: smiling to you, dear

My dear friend, I am pretty and passionate Ukrainian woman, but I am lonely. My heart dies without love as beautiful flower dies without water. I need to love and to be beloved as rose needs to be watered every day. I need kisses and love as no flower can live without sunny rays. Waiting for your response.

Josi

Subject: Thanks for renaming the greatest comic of all time.

Hi. I've been a fan of Tales from the Crypt for a long time now. Too young for the initial run, but I read a bunch of the reprints, and watched the show. I just finished the new issue #2, and have to say the new comics completely and totally lived up to the originals, the stories are just as creepy, and the art is just completely fabulous. My only complaint is that there is no possibility to get a subscription to "TFTC." Just leaving my opinion, and asking if you are going to also revive the "Vault of Horror" and "Haunt of Fear"? Thanks,

A Fan

An interesting query, Al! What do the rest of you EC Fan-Addicts think?

As for subsCRYPTions, just send us a check or money order, in US funds only, for \$24.00 for a one-year, six-issue subscription to TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Subscriptions begin with the next issue published after we receive your order.

Subject: Keep up the good work!

Hey, I'd just like to say that I LOVE YOUR TALES FROM THE CRYPT COMICS! I still love the originals, but these are easier for me to read (I'm 13). The artwork is semi-good in "The Garden" though. My favorite comic so far was in issue #2 called "The Tenant." Keep up the terrific work! Thank you to the people and my favorite dead-wood run, The Crypt-Keeper! I am in love with the HBO series but most definitely the comic I grew up with them since my parents are horror fiend-itics! Love the comics and love the gore!

Maggot Kisses,
Lesley

Thanks, Lesley! If we haven't rotted your young mind yet, maybe we will next issue!

That's all for now! Don't miss TALES FROM THE CRYPT #4—featuring virtual madness by Neil Kleid and Chris Noeck entitled "Extra Life" and a prescient preachy by Dan McGregor, James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook called "Crystal Clear"!

And keep those emails and letters coming, kiddies! Tell us what you thought of this stratospheric, yet transcendental third issue. Send your letters to:

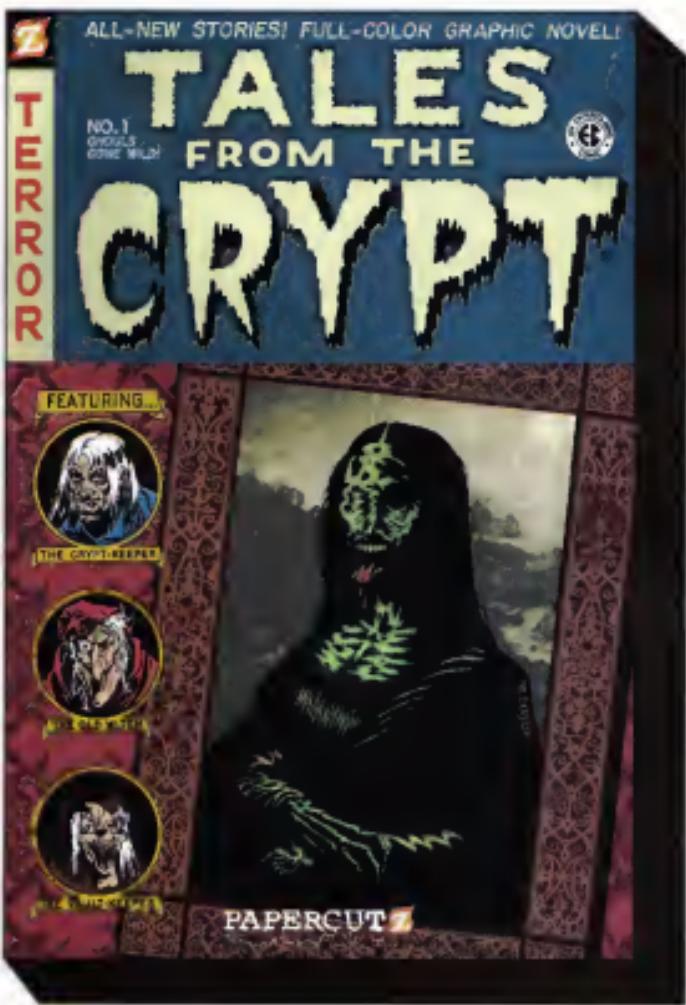
The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your critiqued commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: seltzerup@papercrete.com.

Get back to me after you die, José! (Got to get a new spam-filter!)

E.C. FANS!

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